Hafa Adai!

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75¢

VISITING FORBIDDEN ISLAND

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

A tourist couple from Guam takes a break from hiking down to the Forbidden Island beach in Kagman to take in the stunning views. While its rugged terrain keeps many away, Forbidden Island remains a must-see spot on Saipan, especially for the adventurous. In March 2014 alone, the CNMI received 40,666 tourists, almost the same level as that of March 2013 with 40,613.

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Tinian mayor, Finance at odds over $676K that went to CUC

» Finance says Tinian's 3-month billings exceed budget for 6 months
» House PUTC chair: Arbitrary taking of money questionable

Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz said yesterday the Department of Finance took $676,000.08 from his office's account to directly pay their bills to the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. without consulting Tinian and leaving them with a negative account, especially ahead of the island's fiesta.

Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson said last night, though, that they paid CUC "as directed by the expenditure authority." Finance also said the Tinian mayor's office's three-month utility bills exceeded its budget for six months.

The Tinian mayor, however, believes that CUC's "leaking pipes" are to blame for this, saying they continue to see high utility bills despite power and water use cuts.

For instance, the mayor said it is impossible for the Tinian gymnasium to "use" $108,008.13 worth of CUC water in a month even after closure of certain portions of the gym to conserve water.

The mayor's office is therefore dealing with two issues—what it claims as Finance's taking of funds from their account without consulting them, and the

See MAYOR on Page 4

Fitial will appear in court today—Nutting

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

» Lawyer says negotiations ongoing but no agreement yet

Former governor Benigno R. Fitial will personally make an initial appearance in Superior Court today, Wednesday, at 1:30pm, according to Fitial's lawyer, Stephen Nutting.

In a phone interview yesterday, Nutting said that Associate Judge David A. Wiseman has preliminarily approved a $50,000 property bond for Fitial to be released on his own recognizance.

Nutting said they will be discussing at the hearing what sort of travel restrictions, if any, will be placed on the former governor while proceedings are pending.

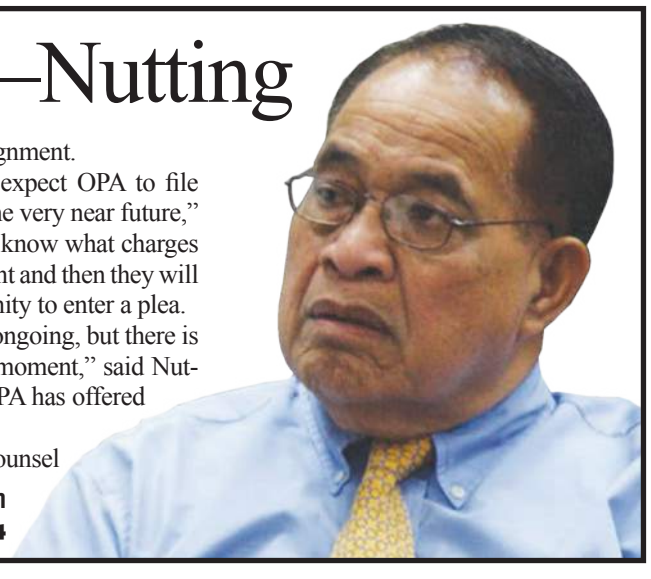
The lawyer said the Office of the Public Auditor has yet to file formal charges against Fitial as of yesterday, so there will be no arraignment.

Nutting said they expect OPA to file the information in "the very near future," after which they will know what charges are going to be brought and then they will be given the opportunity to enter a plea.

"Negotiations are ongoing, but there is no agreement at the moment," said Nutting when asked if OPA has offered a plea agreement.

OPA legal counsel

See FITIAL on Page 4



Legislature trains sights on 'unchartered idle' land of PSS. PAGE 2
SHEFA reveals nearly 1,500 'inactive' files of scholars. PAGE 3

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BEFORE THE CW PROGRAM EXPIRES ON DEC. 31, 2014

OPINION METER
This week's poll:
Does your family have a disaster preparedness plan?
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INSIDE

BUSINESS

The push to raise the minimum wage seems ready to get buried in Congress. ➤ PAGE 13

ASIA

President Barack Obama vigorously defends his foreign policy record. ➤ PAGE 15

Local

WEBSITE TRANSFORMATION TRAINING
The CNMI Department of Labor has been undergoing transformational changes to its existing website and, in preparation for the first phase rollout of the initial changes to the site, the department has taken the initiative with its website designer to conduct capacity building that will empower each department division with the necessary user capacity and administrative responsibilities. The site will also adhere to keeping the information contents current, ensuring the community in both public and private sectors are well informed and are getting the most current information. Tinian Labor Office participated via telephone.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Report ranks Guam utility's reliability as low

HAGATNA, Guam (AP)—The Guam Power Authority could do more to improve the consistency of its electricity generation following hundreds of power outages last year, according to a new report.

Administrative law judge Fred Horecky presented the report compiled by Lummus Consultants International to the Public Utilities Commission last week, *Pacific Daily News* reported.

The report used data provided by the utility to identify the causes of 914 power outages that occurred between Dec. 3, 2012, and Nov. 29, 2013. Horecky said the figures show some of the worst reliability in recent years.

The report says the Guam Power Authority also could do more to inform the public about outages.

Equipment failure was the most frequent cause of Guam power outages last year, accounting for 68 percent of the cases, the report says. The second most common reason for outages was unknown causes, typically meaning power loss caused by vegetation or animals. Animals and human error accounted for other outages.

The utility's legal counsel, Graham Botha, told commissioners at Thursday's meeting that there are costs with improving reliability.

But Joe Duenas, a member of the Consolidated Commission on Utilities, disagreed.

"When we need to make improvements, we don't always need more money," Duenas said.

The report says an inability to invest in baseload units at appropriate levels and prioritizing U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requirements are reasons the utility would find it difficult to focus on reliability.

Commissioners approved an order to require the authority to report the cause and location of unplanned outages, as well as how long it expects power to be down.

Legislature trains sights on 'unchartered idle' land of PSS

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Legislature wants to use a large parcel of land that belongs to the CNMI Public School System for other purposes.

House Resolution 18-54 was recently introduced at the House of Representatives and the bill is currently under review by the House Natural Resources Committee.

The resolution specifically requests the Office of the Governor and the Department of Public Lands to redesignate 44,485 square meters of public land in Marpi that was given to PSS several years ago.

Then-acting CNMI governor Jesus C. Borja signed the executive order on Jan. 23, 1996, designating two parcels of public lands to PSS. These included Lot No. 011 G 756 containing an area of about 154,289 square meters in Kagman, and Lot No. 045 A 025, containing 44,485 square meters in Marpi.

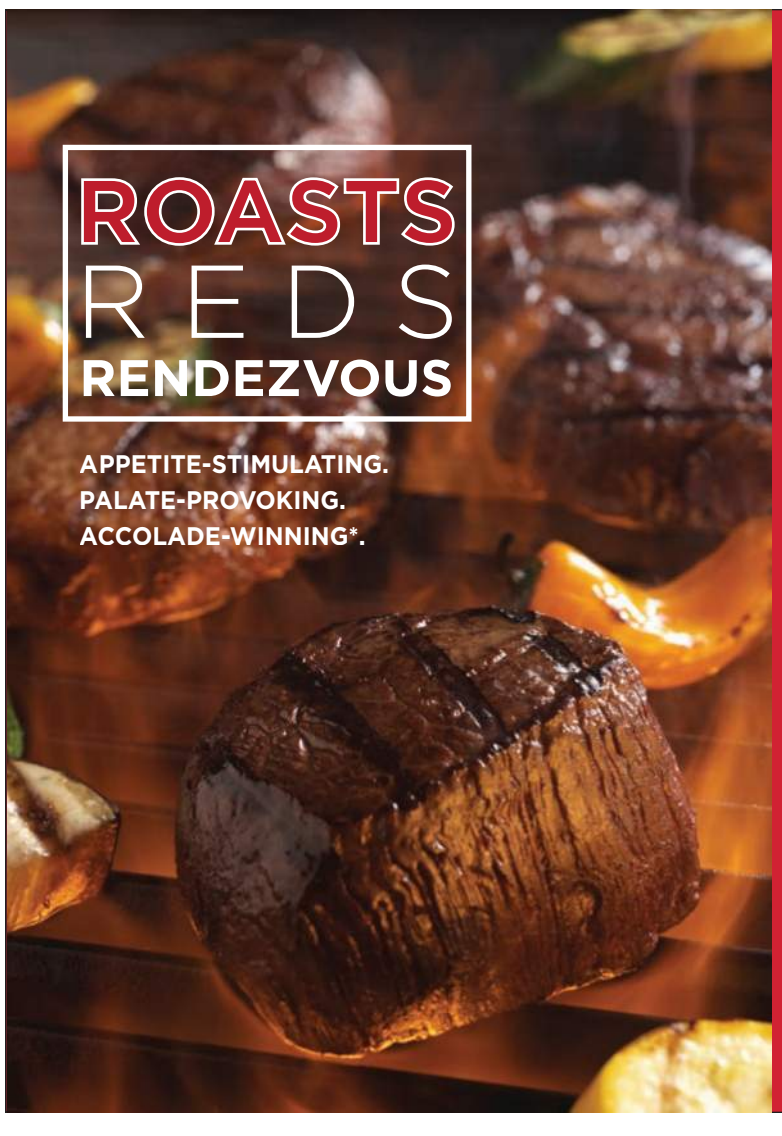
Based on Executive Order No. 94-3, these properties were given to PSS exclusively for the construction and operation of schools and other education-related activities.

Now a resolution specifically targets the Marpi land in order to build a community park and other features like a basketball court for residents within Precinct 4.

This resolution was introduced by Rep. Christopher Deleon Guerrero (Cov-Saipan) last Feb. 3, and was then referred to a committee.

In its findings, Deleon Guerrero's resolution indicates that "the public lands designated to PSS approximately two decades

See PSS on Page 4



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Palacios: Marine monument co-management plan could drag on

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Almost four months since President Barack Obama signed a proclamation temporarily withholding the transfer to the CNMI of submerged lands around five islands that are either part of a national marine monument or under lease to the U.S. military, the CNMI has "not received any formal communication as to a co-management agreement" that would eventually allow the Commonwealth to have control over the remaining submerged lands, said Department of Lands and Natural Resources Secretary Arnold Palacios.

"That co-management plan could drag on because there is no specific timeline. It's an open-ended timeline. Remember that Gov. Inos and the Legislature asked for a 180-day timeline to come up with a co-management plan but this was not considered? So years could pass without anything. The CNMI won't be able to con-

See PALACIOS on Page 4

BOE approves Head Start application for a five-year noncompetitive grant

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Board of Education has approved the Public School System's application for a five-year noncompetitive grant for the CNMI Head Start program for 2014-2015 that would bring in $1.8 million during the first year of operation.

NMI Head Start program director Melissa Palacios told *Saipan Tribune* that this is a first time for the BOE to apply for the five-year noncompetitive grant in the wake of the 2013 tri-annual review conducted by the federal health agency on the CNMI Head Start program.

The board was approved by Region IX Head Start Office with the authority to administer the Head Start program in the Commonwealth for five more years after it successfully passed a comprehensive assessment in March. Prior to this, PSS would submit grant applications for Head Start funding every year.

Palacios disclosed that for 2014-2015, the program is seeking $1.837 million in funding. This is inclusive of a local share of about $200,000 as well as roughly $90,000 that the federal agency restored from last year's budget cuts, and the 1.2 percent increase in COLA (cost of living allowance).

"We were recently informed by the regional office that we are included and eligible in the five-year noncompetitive grant application as a result of the great job we did during the 2013 triennial review and our ongoing monitoring on a daily basis," said Palacios.

Compared to previous applications, the five-year application contains several components that includes long-range goals, program impacts, service delivery, approach to school readiness, budget request, and justifications, among others.

Based on the 72-page grant application approved Monday by the BOE, the $1.8 million it is asking for in the first year will be used for program operation ($1.784 million) and for training and technical assistance ($52,695).

"Funds will allow the program to continue to provide comprehensive and high quality services for school readiness, while operating 28 sessions in 14 classrooms at 10 centers," states a portion of the application.

Head Start is mandated to serve 462 children each year on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

The BOE indicated three long-term goals: First, it will improve the quality of services to increase support for child outcomes and school readiness to ensure that majority of transitioning children will meet the objectives for kindergarten readiness based on the teaching strategies for kindergarten readiness. Second is to increase physical exercise three times per week in Head Start classrooms and to encourage healthy food choices for Head Start children. Third, it will seek the active engagement of parents and families to participate in program opportunities to support their child's development and achievement of family goals.

SHEFA reveals nearly 1,500 'inactive' files of scholars

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance has a huge volume of "inactive files" of scholars totaling 1,496.

SHEFA administrator Merissa S. Rasa said the the CNMI government has invested $12.916 million in financial grants for this close to 1,500 inactive scholars,.

Rasa said that SHEFA records as of April 2014 show that close to 400 tracking letters have been sent to inactive scholars. For April alone, Rasa's office sent out 71 letters.

"The total number of inactive files is 1,496. So 400 of those were sent tracking letters. For these 1,496 inactive [scholars], the money invested by the government is close to $13 million," said Rasa, adding that more data needs to be searched to determine exactly how much is owed by these defaulted scholars.

SHEFA policy dictates that within three months of completion of courses, a scholar is required to return to Saipan for employment or to provide services in the private or public sector. If a former recipient decides to remain and work abroad three months after completion or termination of their college studies, the grant assistance converts into a loan. When this happens, the grant recipient must repay SHEFA the amount awarded with interest. Repayment is required of grant recipients who default on their scholarship.

Rasa disclosed that from 2006 to 2014, SHEFA collected a total of $32,462 from defaulted scholars. In April 2014 alone, collection amounted to $9,360.

It was revealed that of the 71 tracking letters sent in April this year, SHEFA received only three responses. Rasa concedes that eliciting responses from defaulted scholars continue to be a challenge.

Saipan Tribune learned that the tracking letters sent to scholars include a breakdown of each term they received an award, the amount of each award, and how many months they are required to work in the CNMI. If they are in default, a billing statement is included with the breakdown of the awards, the total amount owed, and a payment plan.

Meantime, Rasa said that for the spring 2014 semester, the awards disbursed to recipients total $870,500 as of April 24.

For this term, SHEFA received 1,237 applications (305 from new students; 80 from returning students; and 852 from ongoing students). Of this figure, 437 applications were approved as of March 20, while over 430 were denied mostly due to incomplete requirements. Others are pending, including five applications from Northern Marianas Trade Institute students.

Judge denies motion to file 3rd amended suit vs lawyer

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman has denied a request by the parents and family members of the late teen beauty titlist Vinae Teofilia Deleon Guerrero to file a third amended malpractice complaint against one of their former lawyers.

Wiseman ruled that undue delay and prejudice to attorney Joseph J. Iacopino would occur if the court allowed Vicente and Chazrae Deleon Guerrero to tailor their complaint weeks before trial.

Wiseman said that justice would not be served by giving the plaintiffs a third opportunity to add a closely related theory of liability, given the extensive history of the case and the two previous opportunities afforded plaintiffs to amend their original complaint.

Vicente and Nadine Deleon Guerrero are the parents of Vinae Deleon Guerrero, who died in May 2007 after her vehicle was broadsided by a boom truck on Middle Road, Gualo Rai. Chazrae Deleon Guerrero is the sister of Vinae.

Iacopino and attorney Colin Thompson served as counsels for the Deleon Guerreros and other family members in their wrongful death lawsuit against the boom truck's driver, Pacific Drilling Ltd., Mid-Pac Micronesia, Bisnes Mami Inc., and other unnamed co-defendants.

The lawsuit ended in a settlement. The settlement, however, prompted the Deleon Guerreros to sue their former lawyers Iacopino, Thompson, and Gilbert Birnbrich. Birnbrich used to work at Thompson's law office.

According to court records, the Deleon Guerreros first filed their initial complaint against Iacopino on April 4, 2011, alleging legal malpractice, breach of fiduciary duty, breach of contract, and breach of duty of loyalty, as well as a claim for punitive damages.

In May 2011, Thompson, Birnbrich, and the Thompson law office filed a motion to dismiss the complaint. In August 2011, Iacopino also filed a motion to dismiss.

On Feb. 22, 2013, Wiseman granted Thompson, Thompson law firm, and Birnbrich's motion to dismiss as to all counts, as well as Iacopino's motion to dismiss two counts.

The remaining causes of action—counts 2, 4, and 5—involved legal malpractice based upon breach of fiduciary duty, breach of duty of loyalty, and punitive damages, respectively.

In April 2013, plaintiffs amended their complaint, alleging the remaining causes of action and adding a fourth cause of action, alleging a Consumer Protection Act violation.

In May 2013, Iacopino sought to have the amended complaint dismissed. In October 2013, Wiseman granted Iacopino's motion to dismiss. Plaintiffs were given five days to file an amended complaint.

In October 2013, plaintiffs filed a second amended complaint, retaining all the causes of action alleged in the first amended complaint but with further factual support as to what plaintiffs' claim are the damages caused by defendant's alleged acts.

Iacopino then filed a motion to dismiss the second amended complaint.

On Dec. 5, 2013, Wiseman denied Iacopino's motion to dismiss the remaining counts—1, 2, and 3—but granted his motion as to the Consumer Protection Act violation.

In that order, Wiseman declined to allow a third amendment of the complaint, saying the plaintiffs had two previous opportunities to tailor their complaint according to the requirements of the law.

The judge then set a trial for Feb. 3, 2014, but reset it to June 9, 2014, due to various discovery issues.

On March 3, 2014, the plaintiffs sought to file a third amended complaint. The Deleon Guerreros alleged that, based upon the promissory note received by their counsel on Feb. 25, 2014, justice requires that Vicente and Nadine be allowed to amend the complaint to re-allege a violation of the Consumer Protection Act—a cause of action the court dismissed in its Dec. 5, 2013 order.

Iacopino opposed the motion, arguing that discovery has concluded, the motion cut-off date of April 2, 2014, has passed, and trial is looming.

In his order last week, Wiseman determined that Iacopino would be prejudiced by allowing the Deleon Guerreros to raise new theories of liability just before trial and that accepting the third amended complaint would cause undue delay.

Even if plaintiffs were allowed to file an amendment for the third time, Wiseman said it would be futile because the new theory of liability would likely be barred by the statute of limitations and may not survive dispositive motions.

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(at the close of business December 31, 2013)
(in thousands of dollars)

ASSETS	2013
Cash and due from banks	$ 8,228
Interest bearing deposits in other banks	$ 500
Investment securities	$ 580
Loans (net)	$ 9,356
Accrued interest receivable	$ 59
Other assets	$ 579
Premises and equipment (net)	$ 279
Foreclosed real estate (net)	$ 156
Total Assets	$ 19,737
Liabilities and Shareholders' Equity	
Deposits:	
Non-interest bearing	$ 6,700
Interest bearing	$ 7,960
Total deposits	$ 14,660
Accrued interest payable	$ 31
Accrued expenses and other liabilities	$ 80
Total Liabilities	$ 14,771
Shareholders Equity:	
Common Stock	$ 2,507
Additional paid in capital	$ 6,075
Accumulated deficit	$ (1,060)
Treasury stock	$ (2,556)
Total Stockholders' Equity	$ 4,966
Total Liabilities and Shareholders' Equity	$ 19,737

audited financial statements are available for review at the Office of Director of Banking

House panel OKs 5 to 25 years for drug trafficking

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

With the CNMI ramping up efforts to curb illegal drug use and drug trafficking, the House Judiciary and Government Operations is recommending passage of a bill imposing jail time of five to 25 years for drug trafficking that is commensurate with whether or not the crime was committed by a first-time offender or a former convicted felon on his second, third, or fourth drug-related offense.

The bill provides judicial discretion for the serious offense of dealing drugs, especially "ice."

"This legislation maintains the severe penalties for those that repeat their crimes by committing a second or subsequent offense while providing wide latitude to courts," the House JGO said in recommending passage of Rep. Christopher Leon Guerrero's (Cov-Saipan) House Bill 18-38 in the form of House Draft 1.

For first offenders, the bill still mandates the court to sentence the offender to not less than five years without the possibility of any early release via parole. However, it maintains the 25-year possible sentence for cases that are egregious.

At present, the minimum mandatory penalty for a first offense for trafficking "ice" is 25 years without the possibility of suspension or parole.

Under the bill, the term of 25 years becomes mandatory only upon a second offense as opposed to a first offense.

The life imprisonment provision, which applied to a second offense in the original law, now becomes the applicable penalty for the third or subsequent offense under this amendment.

The House JGO Committee is chaired by the bill's author, Leon Guerrero, a former police officer with the Department of Public Safety. Five of the seven committee members signed off on the report recommending House passage of HB 18-38, HD1.

Under the bill, parole eligibility starts only after serving the minimum term of five years.

The bill also clarifies that the term of incarceration is mandatory and that the fine component is in addition to jail time as opposed to being an alternative to the mandatory term of incarceration.

Tapah moves away from Saipan; will affect Pagan, Alamagan

Tropical Storm Tapah intensified into a typhoon but moved farther away from Tinian and Saipan yesterday. It will begin to affect Pagan and Alamagan early today, Wednesday, according to the Guam-based National Weather Service.

As of 4pm yesterday, a tropical storm warning and a typhoon watch remained in effect for Alamagan and Pagan.

At this time, the center of Typhoon Tapah was 130 miles southeast of Alamagan, 150 miles southeast of Pagan, 145 miles northeast of Saipan, 160 miles northeast of Tinian, and 220 miles northeast of Rota.

At 2:30pm yesterday, a tropical storm warning for Saipan and Tinian was canceled.

Tropical storm warning means tropical storm force winds of up to 39 miles per hour to 73 mph are possible within 24 hours. Typhoon watch means typhoon force winds of 74 mph or greater are possible.

Contrary to an NWS forecast on Monday, no heavy rains occurred on Saipan yesterday; in fact, it was a bit sunny.

NWS said yesterday that Typhoon Tapah's tropical storm force winds and heaviest shower activity have moved out of Saipan waters to the northeast.

As of 4pm yesterday, Typhoon Tapah was moving north at 8 miles per hour mph and was packing maximum winds of 75 mph.

NWS said Tapah is expected to intensify slightly through Monday night then begin to gradually weaken today, Wednesday. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

FITIAL

From Page 1

George Hasselback earlier told reporters that they have yet to file formal charges against Fitial but added that they will file them "pretty soon."

"The goal is and has always been to return a criminal defendant to the Commonwealth and have that person face the charges here in Superior Court," Hasselback said. That goal, he added, has been accomplished, with no expenses to the Commonwealth.

Fitial is facing criminal charges for allegedly shielding former attorney general Edward T. Buckingham from being served with penal summons last year.

Fitial returned to Saipan from the Philippines on Saturday, four days before his April 30 court appearance.

Fitial resigned as governor on Feb. 21, 2013. He and his wife Josie then left the CNMI.

Upon Nutting's request last March 17, Wiseman quashed the arrest warrant he issued against Fitial and directed the former governor to voluntarily appear in court today, Wednesday, at 1:30pm.

Last Feb. 19, Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo found Buckingham guilty of all public corruption charges except one and sentenced him to 3.5 years in prison, all suspended.

MAYOR

From Page 1

leaking and "antiquated" CUC water pipes that result in loss of water and bloated water billings.

As of yesterday, the mayor's office has yet to receive a response from CUC executive director Allan Fletcher about the mayor's request to send an engineer to check the water pipes and rectify the billings charged to the Tinian government.

Dela Cruz said Finance "took it upon themselves" to pay CUC the amount from the Tinian mayor's office account "without rectifying accounts and leaving the mayor's office of Tinian account with a negative $339,996."

In a phone interview, Dela Cruz said his office discovered the amount taken from his office's account on April 15 when they were about to pay for another service on Tinian.

"Money was not available anymore. We found out Finance obligated it to CUC. The Legislature gave me expenditure authority but it seems someone else took that authority away from me," the mayor told *Saipan Tribune.*

Larson, in response to questions posed by *Saipan Tribune* to press secretary Angel Demapan, said the Tinian mayor's office certified the bills that were submitted to her office for payment.

"We then paid as directed by the expenditure authority. …We didn't take anyone's funds. We used the funds allotted for CUC and then covered the remaining balance with the 'all others' portion of the budget. Every agency was given advice on the need to reduce power bills during the budget talks, the mayors' council meeting and also after passage of the budget," Larson said.

She said Finance pays CUC weekly, sometimes biweekly, depending on the bills submitted by agencies.

Larson said the municipality of Tinian submitted requests for payment of power bills from Oct. 1 through Dec. 31, 2013, during April 2014.

"The total amount for all three bills was greater than the budget allotted for the first two quarters of the fiscal year. We exhausted those funds and then had to use 'all others' to cover the shortfall. This language is included in the 2014 budget act and all departments and agencies were advised of this and encouraged to conserve power to prevent us from having to use their 'all others' budget to cover the shortfall," Larson said.

The Finance secretary pointed out that the Tinian mayor's office "is an exception" and it "went over budget for utilities in a significant amount."

Dela Cruz's office said that Finance's direct payment to CUC using Tinian funds was done without consulting Tinian.

"This could not have come at a worse time, immediately before the Tinian Fiesta. Of course, the Fiesta will go on, but it has definitely hampered our ability to do all the cleanup projects we had scheduled. We do not know if this has happened to any other government agencies. Ever since the 2014 budget was adopted, we have worked at reducing water and power consumption. The increase in power rates did not help. Our problem is there is no engineer at Tinian CUC or within the Tinian Municipal Government to help us identify underground water leaks, the only reason for these outrageous water billings," the Tinian mayor's office said.

Rep. Lorenzo Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan), chairman of the House Committee on Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications, said yesterday if it is indeed true that Finance "arbitrarily" took out funds from the Tinian mayor's office account, that is "very questionable."

But he said he has not heard whether other agencies or offices have had their funds used without their knowledge.

"It's like an adult taking a boy's candy," the lawmaker said.

As for CUC's leaking pipes as the Tinian mayor's office claims, Deleon Guerrero hopes that CUC will send its engineer as the mayor requested, to help fix the problem and for the mayor's office to be charged only for the actual water they were able to use.

Repeated requests to CUC

The Tinian mayor, in an April 28 letter to CUC's Fletcher, said while most agencies on Tinian have been able to reduce power and water billings, they seem to be "trying to push water uphill with certain accounts."

The Tinian gymnasium, under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, is just an example. In a January 2014 billing, Tinian gymnasium-DCCA had $108,008.13 for "water usage" and $7,399.45 in water electric charge. Other Tinian offices had water usage of between 54 cents and $407.25 in January 2014.

For February 2014, Tinian gym-DCCA's water usage went down compared to the previous months but was still high at $21,122.70. For March 2014 billing, its water usage was $54,522.63.

Ana Marie C. San Nicolas, resident department head of DCCA-Tinian, told the Tinian mayor in an April 22 letter that they have followed instructions to cut utility costs.

"I requested CUC personnel to shut down my water system since last year and to open when it's needed. Mayor, I just could not explain to you why I am still accumulating this much billing, but to simply say I probably have a major leakage underneath the gymnasium and cannot detect. I would like to work with Mr. Hall and have the CUC come in and locate exactly where the leaking area is at. I will continue to monitor my water billing and hopefully when funds are available, I would like to request for a major overhaul of my water pipes," San Nicolas told Dela Cruz.

Meanwhile, the House Ways and Means Committee will be meeting this morning with the Finance secretary and other officials to discuss Gov. Eloy S. Inos' proposed $134-million budget for fiscal year 2015, as well as his planned fiscal year 2014 supplemental budget.

Some lawmakers are hoping that the governor's supplemental budget would also appropriate payments to CUC. The House PUTC chairman, for example, said $2 million to $3 million going to CUC would bring relief to CUC and its customers. But the governor said $5 million in the supplemental budget is for the retirement settlement trust fund and the rest is for the government's health insurance premium payment.

Some government agencies such as the Public School System and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. owe CUC a total of over $20 million but PSS and CHCC are now working with CUC to settle the obligations.

PALACIOS

From Page 2

trol the 3-mile submerged lands around the island units of the marine monument in a long time," Palacios told *Saipan Tribune.*

As of this week, his office has not heard from any federal agency about the co-management plan.

"We have to begin discussion. But I'm surprised there's not even a formal communication from the Interior or U.S. Commerce in response to the governor's request for a co-management plan and timeline. At the very least, they should have acknowledged the governor's concern," Palacios added.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) also earlier pressed Interior Secretary Sally Jewell to "speed up" the co-management agreement governing federal and CNMI submerged lands in the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument.

Obama exempted from the transfer to the CNMI the control of submerged lands around Farallon de Pajaros (Uracas), Maug, and Asuncion, which are part of the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument, as well as Tinian and Farallon de Medinilla that are under lease to the U.S. military.

The governor and the Legislature asked for a firm 180-day timeline to come up with a co-management plan, among other things, but the Obama administration did not consider this.

The delegate had said after signing over the oil, gas, and mineral rights around the CNMI to the Commonwealth government that the next step for Interior is to complete a co-management agreement with the Commonwealth for the submerged lands in the Islands Unit of the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument. The Interior secretary responded that she has already directed Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service to complete an agreement.

PSS

From Page 2

ago remain uncharted and idle" up to now.

Board of Education chair Herman T. Guerrero told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday, however, that PSS will not give up the As Matuis property, pointing out its importance to PSS' future plans.

Guerrero said that until now, PSS has yet to have a public high school in the northern part of the island. As a homestead area, he cited the expected population growth in Marpi that in the future may potentially need a public school.

"I assume that 20 or 30 years from now, the community will grow and as such, we need to plan for that," he told *Saipan Tribune*, adding that planning ahead for the future of education is what the BOE practices.

"Our vision is looking at the future needs of the community," he added.

Saipan Tribune learned that PSS, at one time, had planned to build a high school in the property. However, this was deferred due to "shifting demographics" as people moved from one place to another.

Guerrero said that as the government opens more homestead areas, more schools will be needed—if not now, then in the years ahead.

During a previous BOE meeting, members agreed to oppose the resolution and a final comment will soon be submitted to the House committee.

"But for now, instead of taking that land from PSS, perhaps an MOU [memorandum of understanding] may be executed within the property that would allow a portion of it to be used for community purposes like a basketball court…but we're not giving that up, " said Guerrero.

The As Matuis Village Homestead consists approximately of 300 house lots and was established in 1990.

Another doctor cites unlawful termination of hospital privileges

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

»Physician seeks OAG's response, determination within 90 days

Another former medical staff of the public hospital, Dr. Gary Ramsey, is alleging wrongful termination of his medical privilege at the Commonwealth Health Center and is threatening to seek injunctive relief in federal court if he fails to get a favorable outcome from the Office of the Attorney General.

Sources disclosed that Ramsey, through his lawyer, Stephen Woodruff, formally appealed to Attorney General Joey San Nicolas in January this year, seeking damages for injuries he suffered as a result of the issue.

Ramsey, sources disclosed, first applied for medical privilege in November 2009. Despite a committee recommendation in December 2009 to approve his application, the then-management of the Department of Public Health refused to issue an approval letter for Ramsey, depriving him of his right to the privilege. Under the policy, the governing body is obliged within 90 days to either accept the recommendation of the medical executive committee or refer it back for future consideration, stating the reasons for the decision. This was allegedly not accorded Ramsey.

Saipan Tribune learned that Ramsey's medical privilege was finally recognized after two years—in 2011—when the privilege was confirmed by the then-CEO of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. It took an additional eight months for the doctor to actually secure a job, using the alleged wrongfully delayed privilege.

Because of this, sources said, Ramsey is seeking over $500,000 in damages for violations of his constitutional rights.

Saipan Tribune found out that the physician is also accusing the current corporation management of "illegal termination of privileges" when this was stopped in 2013.

Ramsey's medical privilege at CHC is valid until Jan. 1, 2014. However, he was surprised to be informed on Oct. 4, 2013, during a visit to the hospital, that he was no longer allowed in the medical records department because his medical privileges had expired.

Ramsey also found out later that his privilege was not only terminated but his application for renewal was not acted upon by both the committee and the governing body. Despite his demand of a hearing on this adverse action, it was learned that the physician was not accorded a hearing.

Saipan Tribune learned that the physician is seeking a response from the OAG within 90 days after the issue was brought to its attention last Jan. 31.

San Nicolas has yet to respond to *Saipan Tribune*'s inquiries as of yesterday.

Medical privilege allows a physician to use the treatment facilities of the public hospital for their surgeries and operation. Losing this privilege, doctors—whether in public or private clinics— cannot operate or provide services to their clients.

Saipan Tribune learned that Ramsey, a former employee at CHCC, currently works at the Pacific Fertility Institute.

Zoning outreach set for Monday

The Saipan Zoning Office is encouraging the public to attend one of its many outreach activities this Monday, May 5, at the Chacha Oceanview Junior High School.

The outreach will be scheduled along with the Parent Teach Student Association meeting and will discuss both the intricacies of the Saipan Zoning Law of 2013 and the school events for all Kagman schools. It will start at 6pm.

Zoning administrator Therese Ogumoro said they will be doing many of these outreach activities in schools. She said the last outreach was at Saipan Southern High School. Monday's outreach is for all Kagman schools that also include Kagman High School and COJHS.

"We want to address and gain the public's understanding, to educate them more about the changes in the law, and we would like to hear their concerns and that is our main aim this year," Ogumoro said.

Zoning will start implementing the law and providing outreach is part of the office's way of reaching out to residents and businesses.

"We are trying to go one by one," Ogumoro said.

Zoning has jurisdiction over all development on construction buildings, both residential and commercial. Zoning is also in charge of land use in particular zoning districts. They also regulate signs, public nuisances that include junk cars, damaged and hazardous buildings, regulation of non-conforming structures built prior to February 2008, as well as parking, general building designs, landscape, lightings for parking, and street lights.

Zoning planner Maryann Arriola said they want to inform as many people as possible about the new zoning law during their outreaches.

"The purpose of the presentation is to inform residents and businesses about the Saipan Zoning Law of 2013 and to educate them on the law," Arriola said.

According to Ogumoro, Zoning has also started its islandwide inspections.

Arriola characterized these inspections as courtesy calls on all residents and businesses throughout Saipan that the Zoning law is being administered and that people need to learn about it. ***(Jayson Camacho)***

Final draft of $185K settlement with Woodruff OK'd

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood approved yesterday the CNMI government's final draft of the settlement deal with Betty Johnson's local counsel, Stephen C. Woodruff, for his $185,000 attorney's fees.

Tydingco-Gatewood said she read and considered the stipulated motion filed by the CNMI government and Woodruff to approve the settlement, the settlement agreement, as well as all arguments and submissions from the parties at the hearings.

Tydingco-Gatewood approved the payment of $185,000 to Woodruff during a hearing on March 3, 2014, and ordered the parties to file a final draft of their settlement deal no later than March 7, 2014.

The CNMI government and Woodruff filed the final draft of the settlement on March 7, 2014.

According to the deal, the CNMI shall pay Woodruff $185,000 on or before Friday, May 2, 2014, "in full satisfaction of its obligation to pay to Woodruff attorney's fees and reimbursement of costs" under the settlement agreement in Johnson's class action.

Woodruff's initial request was between $1 million to $2.9 million.

The CNMI government also settled with Johnson's original counsel, Bruce Lee Jorgensen, for $800,000. Tydingco-Gatewood placed the deal under advisement. Jorgensen's initial demand for payment was at least $18.6 million.

The judge also placed under advisement, the petitions for attorney's fees and costs filed by Johnson's other counsels: Bronster Hoshibata and Timothy Lord.

The Hawaii-based Hoshibata is seeking $17.5 million, while the San Rafael, California-based Lord is demanding either $3.6 million or $5.9 million.

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Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-14-015

UTILITY RATE & FINANCIAL CONSULTING SERVICES

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified firms to provide Utility Rate and Financial Consulting Services.

The requested Utility Rate and Financial Services will assist CUC in revising the charge schedules for electricity, water and wastewater by conducting the appropriate rate studies and developing the related cost of service models. In addition to these base rate activities, CUC will also require assistance with periodic reviews of its levelized energy adjustment clause (LEAC) rates, water electric charge (WEC) rates, and wastewater electric charge (WWEC) rates. During the two year term of this contract, CUC anticipates filing 3 base rate cases (one each year for electric, water and wastewater) and at least four periodic reviews of the LEAC, WEC, and WWEC. Preparation of testimony and appearance at public hearings will also be required. Ad hoc rate related studies may also be requested from time to time.

The RFP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 for one RFP package set. Prospective Proposers for this RFP must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division by May 16, 2014 to be considered.

A Pre-proposal Conference will be held on May 15, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. (ChST), at the CUC Training Room, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC RFP 14-015, Utility Rate and Financial Consulting Services to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No.3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O.Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on June 4, 2014. Proposals mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time.

All Offerors are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of, and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment. There shall be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing proposers.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes which will become the obligation of the proposer awarded a contract.

This Request for Proposal does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals in anticipation of a contract. This request and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on May 16, 2014 to Manny B. Sablan, Manager, CUC Procurement & Supply via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org, with a copy to Charles Warren, CUC Chief Financial Officer via email address charles.warren@cucgov.org

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Manager, Procurement & Supply

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS
CUC-SOQ-14-013

DESIGN OF LOWER BASE SEWER SYSTEM

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) from qualified architecture & engineering (A&E) firms to design the Lower Base Sewer System on the island of Saipan, which will replace the existing and dilapidated sewer system which dates back to the Naval administration of Saipan. The design will intercept the existing Capitol Hill sewer in the lower portion of Isa Drive, will service the main Lower Base industrial area, and will include a new lift station that will pump into the existing force main coming from Tanapag. This force main will be extended and enlarged from the point of connection to discharge to the existing S-3 lift station at the Saipan Seaport, enabling the abandonment of lift stations S-1, T-3, and the Tan Holdings lift station. Connection of all existing, active buildings within the area served by the design will also be included. A&E services will include the necessary geotechnical and surveying services to develop the design and construction documents. Work must be coordinated with the A&E firm selected by the CNMI Water Task Force (WTF) to design the Lower Base water system, which will be on-going at near the same time as this design contract. This project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and all work is subject to EDA review and approval.

The RFSOQ package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 for one RFSOQ package set. Prospective A&E firms for this RFSOQ must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division by May 30, 2014 to be considered.

A pre-proposal conference will be held on May 22, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. (ChST), at the CUC Training Room, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies of the SOQ must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC SOQ 14-013, Request for Statement of Qualifications-Design of Lower Base Sewer System" to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No.3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O.Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on June 6, 2014. Statements of Qualifications mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time.

All A&E firm are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the A&E firm due to lack of information or understanding of the Request for Statement of Qualifications requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a SOQ under the contract.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible/qualified A&E firms for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of, and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. A&E firms shall be accorded fair and equal treatment. There shall be no disclosure of any information derived from the SOQ submitted by competing A&E firms.

This Request for Statements of Qualifications does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of statements of qualifications in anticipation of a contract. This request and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC procurement regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable federal regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on May 27, 2014 to Manny B. Sablan, Manager, CUC Procurement & Supply via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org. Responses to Questions will be provided no later than May 29, 2014.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All SOQ shall become the property of CUC.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director,
Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

MANNY B. SABLAN
Manager, Procurement &Supply
Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

House panel OKs vesting CHCC with public land but…

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House Natural Resources Committee recommends passage of a bill vesting the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. with some 38,574 square meters of public land adjacent to the hospital, but strictly only for the construction of medical facilities directly associated with the corporation's operations. Over the years, the same tract of land has been eyed for a shopping mall and a federal courthouse, among other possible uses.

This, even as Gov. Eloy S. Inos said last week that the Department of Public Lands is vested with the proper disposition of public lands.

The House committee recommends passage of Rep. Mario Taitano's (Ind-Saipan) House Bill 18-156 in the form of House Draft 1, which contains four minor amendments to the original measure.

A House session may be held as early as this Friday, and the committee report may be adopted at the time.

The committee report comes almost a year since Taitano sued DPL and CHCC for breach of fiduciary duty, and to void a land lease transaction between the two agencies involving the same tract of land. In his taxpayer lawsuit, Taitano said DPL conveyed the public land to CHCC in January 2012—under the Fitial administration—so that the latter will be able to lease the land for the purpose of generating income.

The land in question—Lots 098 D 04 and 098 D 05—is situated at the northeast corner of Chalan Pale Arnold and Navy Hill Road.

Chaired by Rep. Anthony T. Benavente (Ind-Saipan), the committee agrees that it is in the CNMI people's best interest that the lots be used for medical facilities because it is directly adjacent to CHCC.

The committee said the hospital or the Commonwealth Health Center, which is part of CHCC, is already at full capacity at its present location, and no other site is "as well situated as the said lots for the construction of additional medical facilities."

Medical facilities, according to the committee, refer to hospitals, hospices, pharmacies, nursing homes, clinics, medical laboratories, veterans affairs outreach clinic, assisted living families, and other structures directly related to health care and health support.

The design and construction on the lots, according to the House Natural Resources Committee, "shall be limited to the construction of medical facilities and include a small park or rest area for patients and staff to enjoy and unwind."

"To ensure that the lots will only be used for its intended purpose, this Act further states that medical facilities will not include facilities primarily dedicated to commercial or governmental activities not directly related to health care; even if such activities may generate proceeds that indirectly benefit health care. Construction on the said lots other than the construction of medical facilities is prohibited," the committee said.

It added that the bill puts additional safeguards by stating that the conveyance of the lots or any portion of it or interest in the lots for any purpose other than the construction, maintenance or operation of medical facilities is prohibited.

Of the seven House Natural Resources Committee members, six signed off on the committee report.

CHCC chief executive officer Esther L. Muña, in a letter to the House Natural Resources Committee, said that since the hospital opened its doors in 1986, it has encountered many instances when it exceeded the capacity of its 86-bed facility, and that there is a need to "expand and upgrade the hospital facilities."

"Having a vest of Public Land Lot Nos. 098 D04 and D05 to CHCC from the Department of Public Lands will help CHCC in their future application for grant funding or loan to proceed with such project," Muña told Benavente.

Muña said CHC has other areas that need improvement and expansion, such as hospices, skilled nursing facilities, and clinics that focus on reducing incidences of non-communicable diseases.

JKPL to have food drive hosted by Americorps

» Book sale, rummage sale this weekend

The Joeten Kiyu Public Library will be having a food drive for Karidat that will be hosted by the Americorps on May 10.

The food drive will be held at the library in Susupe and will be coordinated by Leeani Villagomez and San Vicente and Dandan elementary schools' Americorps members.

JKPL executive director John Gonzales welcomes the Americorps' team effort in hosting the food drive.

"Saturday is considered the most popular day of the week with high patron traffic so we hope the food drive will be a success," he said.

Gonzales said it is a privilege to collaborate with Americorps in serving the needy.

"We consider it a privilege to collaborate with their group to reach a captive audience and sector of our population in order to collect much needed food supply to serve the needy members of our community and being competently served by an esteemed community organization as the Karidat," he said.

In other news, JKPL will be having a book sale and rummage sale this Saturday, May 3, from 7am to 12pm.

JKPL technical services librarian Rosalyn Ajoste said this will be a great opportunity for the public to sell their used items and buy secondhand books at a discount.

"Make extra cash by selling unwanted or unused items. Lots are at $25 for a 10x10 space and $50 for a 10x20 space. Spaces are limited so stop by the library and reserve one today," she said.

Fore more information, contact JKPL outreach coordinator Celina C. Foreman at 235-7315 or drop by the library.

JKPL's hours are Tuesday to Friday from 10am to 6pm, and on Saturday from 9am to 4pm. It is closed on Sundays, Mondays, and holidays.

For more information on JKPL's outreach, activities, and library information, contact 235-7323. ***(Jayson Camacho)***

Applications due for NMC's Summer Academy

The Northern Marianas College is reminding all high school juniors, seniors, and their parents that applications for the Summer Academy are due today, April 30, 2014.

The Summer Academy, funded by the College Access Challenge Grant program, affords high school students an opportunity to gain meaningful college experience while they are earning transferable college credits. The academy familiarizes students with college life while they are still in high school and can be an excellent way to help students prepare for their eventual transition to college after graduation.

In addition to college level work, participants of the Summer Academy will also receive college advising, academic tutoring, and college-preparatory and life skills training.

The program is fully funded by the CACG, which aims to increase the number of underserved and minority students who are enrolling in college. To do this, the CACG provides a scholarship award of $1,000 to eligible students to cover the cost of their courses.

The Summer Academy for students will run from June 30, 2014, through Aug. 8, 2014. Although classes for the Summer Academy will be held at NMC's As Terlaje campus, some activities will be located off-campus and will be announced in advance. Eligibility for participation in the Summer Academy is based on family income and the ability to meet NMC admissions and financial aid requirements.

For more information about the Summer Academy, contact Christine Inos at 234-5498 ext. 6782 or email christine.inos@marianas.edu. Application forms and other materials can also be downloaded from www.marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Detonation of WWII ordnance moved to May 2

Due to the Tropical Storm Tapah, the planned detonation of unexploded World War II ordnance has been moved from Thursday, May 1, 2014, to Friday, May 2, 2014. The Department of Public Safety will be blocking off the northern part of Saipan, from Marpi north, on May 2, 2014, from 12pm to 3pm. The purpose of this blockage is to dispose of the collection of unexploded ordinance that has been collected by the Department of Public Safety Explosive Response Team.

We are requesting all visitors to these popular areas of the island make arrangements to visit either in the morning before the 12pm deadline or after the operation has completed at 3pm. Anyone with questions can contact the Explosives Response Team Operational Supervisor Sgt. Anthony I. Macaranas at (670) 483-5818. ***(DPS)***

Election office in Susupe opens every Saturday

The Commonwealth Election Commission would like to inform all CNMI residents that are U.S citizens that the commission's office in Susupe will be open every Saturday, starting May 3, 2014, from 10am to 2pm for those CNMI residents who would like to register to vote for the 2014 general election to be held on Nov. 4, 2014. As initiative(s) regarding Article 7 of the NMI Constitution will also be on the November ballot, registration for Northern Marianas Descent Registry will also be accepted. CNMI residents who wish to register to vote must provide a copy of a valid U.S passport or a certification of live birth as proof of U.S citizenship. Those who wish to register for the Northern Marianas Decent Registry must provide a copy of their certificate of live birth. For more information, contact the Commonwealth Election Commission office at 664-VOTE (8683). ***(CEC)***

1 Saipan beach red-flagged

The Division of Environmental Quality has red-flagged the Obyan Beach on Saipan and is advising the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of this location for the next 48 hours or until otherwise notified. Samples collected from this location contained excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria (enterococci) that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water. DEQ analyzes water samples collected from Saipan's recreational beaches and storm drainage every Tuesday. For more information, contact DEQ at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

BECQ Cleanup Brigade eyes Tank Beach

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality's Cleanup Brigade will be at it again, picking up trash at Tank Beach in Kagman this Saturday, May 3, 2014, at 8am.

If you would like to volunteer your time to clean and beautify our island, please meet the BECQ representatives on Saturday at Tank Beach at 8am. Volunteers will split into groups and clean until 10am and break for drinks and then continue, if needed.

This month, outstanding brigade volunteers who participated in at least 10 monthly cleanups will receive a brigade cap and those who participate in at least three cleanups will receive a brigade t-shirt. For more information about volunteering, contact the BECQ office at 664-8500/1. ***(BECQ)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Board of Parole
P.O. BOX 502641, Saipan, MP 96950-2641
Tel: NOS.: (670) 664-3300 – 3304 FAX: (670) 664-3310
E-mail: govbop@pticom.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
Preliminary Hearing

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor Jude U. Hofschneider, through the CNMI Board of Parole, and pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section II of the "Open Government Act of 1992", Notice hereby given that a **Preliminary Hearing** is scheduled for **April 30, 2014, (Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m., at the CNMI Board of Parole Office, Capitol Hill Road, Building Number 1216**, Saipan. The following individual(s) will appear before the Hearing Examiner:

A. Parolee

1. EVANGELISTA, Ramon R. Cr. Cs. No.: 82-00003 BOP.: 12-005

If you have any question or information, please call the Parole Office at telephone numbers 664-3300 or 3302.

/s/ Rose Ada-Hocog Date: 4/25/14
Hearing Examiner

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB14-DPS/OHSR-095

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MAY 16, 2014
TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF A LED SIGN TRAILER FOR THE TINIAN DPS TRAFFIC SECTION"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ JAMES C. DELEON GUERRERO
COMMISSIONER OF DPS

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
INVITATION FOR BID
(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)

NMHC IFB 2014-002
BID TITLE: "PURCHASING OF FIRE PROTECTION & LIFE SAVING EQUIPMENTS FOR THE CNMI FIRE DIVISION"

DATE OF PUBLICATION: Wednesday, April 30, 2014

Proposal packets will be available on April 30, 2014, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays.

CLOSING DATE: Wednesday, May 21, 2014 - 10:00 a.m.

MANDATORY PRE-BID CONFERENCE: Wednesday, May 14, 2014 - 10:00 a.m. – NMHC Conference Room, Saipan

DESCRIPTION: See Exhibit A and A-1

This project is funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

/s/ Marcie M. Tomokane
Board Chairwoman & Contracting Officer

/s/ Herman S. Sablan, Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

DOCOMO Pacific appoints new president and CEO

TAMUNING, Guam—DOCOMO Pacific, Inc. announced yesterday the appointment of Jonathan Kriegel as DOCOMO Pacific's president and chief executive officer. Kriegel brings over 20 years of valuable industry experience to his new role, having recently led Vodafone Group's Partner Markets business and Business Development in Asia.

Kriegel replaces Jay Shedd, who has served as DOCOMO Pacific's CEO since 2008. "I made a commitment to NTT Docomo to remain as the head of Docomo Pacific throughout the merger and integration of the two great companies. Now that the merger is complete, I will be taking time to pursue other opportunities," said Shedd.

"I would like to thank Jay Shedd for his leadership and contributing to our business development over the past six years and I wish him the best," said Yasuhrio Suzuki, executive director, Global Business Division of NTT Docomo Inc. "Vodafone has been a long time partner of NTT Docomo and we have worked closely with Mr. Kriegel for several years. We feel fortunate to welcome such an outstanding leader to Docomo Pacific."

"We welcome Jonathan Kriegel's experience and leadership to the DOCOMO Pacific family," said DOCOMO Pacific's chief marketing officer Thomas Higa. "In his new role as [CEO], he will be responsible for strengthening our integrated services and products through strategic management of our mobile operations and the high-speed, large-volume fiber optic network that DOCOMO acquired last year. We will take advantage of Mr. Kriegel's expertise in all aspects of telecommunications to continue to offer innovative products and services and to deliver best-in-class customer service in both Guam and the CNMI."

Kriegel said, "I am excited to join DOCOMO Pacific, and I look forward to working with the talented management team and staff who made the company Guam's leading telecommunications provider. I plan to continue improving the quality of the network, enhancing customer service and expanding the range of products available to our customers from DOCOMO Pacific's unique bundle of services including mobile, cable television, Internet, and home phone. We will continue to build on innovative solutions like the FUSION plans by working closely with NTT DOCOMO and our partners to bring our customers the most exciting products and services."

Kriegel's previous roles at Vodafone include managing its strategic alliances with China Mobile and NTT DOCOMO, Strategy, Mergers and Acquisitions, and Corporate Governance. He also served First Pacific Co. as chief operating officer (Mobile) and managing director (Paging) in Indonesia, and earlier as deputy group treasurer in Hong Kong. Kriegel brings strong experience working with mobile network operators across Asia to improve their operating and financial performance. He began his career as a retail banker in San Francisco, California. Kriegel earned an MBA in Finance at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and a BA in History from Pomona College. ***(DOCOMO)***

Injured crewman aboard ship rescued

SANTA RITA, Guam—Watchstanders at Coast Guard Sector Guam command center received notification at 11:40am on Sunday of an injured crewmember aboard the merchant vessel *Tenso* approximately 362 miles east of Guam.

The Liberian-flagged cargo ship *Tenso* requested a medical evacuation for a 39-year-old male crewmember who suffered lacerations to the neck and head.

Coast Guard cutter *Assateague* rendezvoused with the vessel at 10am Monday and transferred a medical corpsman aboard to evaluate the condition of the injured crewmember.

After the corpsman's evaluation and consultation with a flight surgeon, it was determined that an immediate medical evacuation via air asset was warranted.

A Navy HSC-25 helicopter crew launched from Andersen Air Force Base at approximately 10:3am Monday.

The HSC-25 crew arrived on-scene and safely hoisted the injured crewmember at 11:14am Monday. Navy personnel transported the patient to U.S. Naval Hospital Guam where he was met by awaiting EMS and transported to Guam Memorial Hospital.

"Under a memorandum of understanding between the Navy and Coast Guard, HSC-25's commanding officer has local authority to launch to support Coast Guard search and rescue missions," said Capt. Casey White, commander of Coast Guard Sector Guam. "Their response capabilities are very similar to a Coast Guard air station, including trained rescue swimmers, and they respond very quickly."

HSC-25 is the Navy's only forward-deployed MH-60S expeditionary squadron. As part of Helicopter Sea Combat Wing Pacific, it provides an armed helicopter capability for U.S. 7th Fleet in support of logistics, search and rescue and humanitarian assistance missions.

HSC-25 is also the only squadron that maintains a 24-hour search and rescue and medical evacuation alert posture, directly supporting the U.S. Coast Guard, Sector Guam and Joint Region Marianas. ***(USCG)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A Navy HSC-25 helicopter crew medically evacuates an injured crewmember from a cargo ship approximately 362 miles east of Guam Monday morning. A medical corpsman from Coast Guard cutter Assateague requested the evacuation after being transferred aboard the vessel to assess the crewmember's injuries. The HSC-25 crew from Andersen Air Force Base safely hoisted the injured crewmember and transported him to awaiting EMS at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
PO Box 502149; Saipan, MP 96950
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NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

ON AN APPLICATION FOR A QUALIFYING CERTIFICATE AUTHORIZING THE ABATEMENT OF CERTAIN CNMI TAXES

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that:

A. ***Public hearing.*** In accordance with the Investment Incentive Act of 2000, as amended, and pursuant to the rule-making procedures of the Administrative Procedures Act, the Commonwealth Development Authority (CDA) will conduct a public hearing at the *Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center*, *Susupe*, *Saipan*, on *Wednesday*, *April 30*, 2014, at *10:00 a.m.* on the application of *Tasi Homes, LLC*, Applicant, for a Qualifying Certificate, which request is for tax relief by way of abatement of CNMI taxes in consideration of Applicant's proposed *affordable rental housing units*, all pursuant to the Investment Incentive Act of 2000, as amended, and as set out in the Applicant's application for a Qualifying Certificate.

B. ***Nature of hearing.*** This hearing shall be open to the public. Oral or written statements will be received from anyone wishing to testify thereat, which statement will be incorporated into the records of the hearing.

C. ***Further information.*** For further information, please contact CDA at the above telephone numbers or visit its offices at the CDA Building in San Jose, Saipan.

/s/ Manuel A. Sablan
Executive Director

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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PROCUREMENT, INSTALLATION & COMMISSIONING OF PTZ CAMERAS AND SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-009-14/PORT OF TINIAN

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting sealed proposals for the procurement, installation & commissioning of PTZ cameras and security and surveillance systems at the Port of Tinian Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Proposal Package and other considerations will be available for pick up beginning April 30, 2014 at the Office of the Executive Director, 2nd Floor of the Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport.

All proposals shall be sealed and marked on the cover package outside as follows: "Proposal for Procurement, Installation & Commissioning of PTZ cameras and Surveillance System, Project No. CPA-RFP-009-14" (Port of Tinian). One original and four copies of the proposal must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. LOCAL TIME, May 30, 2014, to the Office of the Executive Director at the Saipan International Airport. All Proposals shall become the property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

A pre-proposal conference will be held in Tinian on May 16, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. at Tinian Airport CPA office. Attendance at this pre-proposal conference is mandatory and only those vendors present at the pre-proposal conference will be allowed to submit proposals. A site visit will be conducted immediately after the conference or may be requested by making appointments with the CPA Tinian Ports Manager to ensure that proposers submitting a proposal are aware of the general area where the cameras are to be installed.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Request for Proposals; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding bid rejections or cancellations; or (c) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA.

CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said proposals if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest.

This Project is funded by the 2012 Port Security Grant Program and CPA.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

/s/ MARYANN Q. LIZAMA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Three more sign up as 2014 MMAC sponsors

Three more sponsors have joined the 2014 Marianas March Against Cancer, the signature fund drive of the Commonwealth Cancer Association.

Sorensen Media Group and *Marianas Variety* signed up as title sponsors of this year's edition of the MMAC, each donating more than $3,000 in cash or in-kind donations. Marianas Pacific Distributors signed up as a major sponsor, donating $1,000 in cash and in-kind donations of beverages and other amenities for the MMAC.

Sorensen, which runs Power 99 and ABC7 on Saipan, donated over $5,000 worth of promotions such as radio advertisements and studio interviews.

Sorensen manager Tina Palacios said they have been a supporter of MMAC since it was still called Relay for Life.

"Power 99 has always been a supporter and continue to do that every year and it's one cause that we want to be a part of," Palacios said.

She said that as long as there is hope they will always be part of MMAC.

"Last year I lost two brothers to cancer, my mom's sister passed away, two of my cousins are battling breast cancer, and my good friend is battling stomach cancer…so it is personal and we will continue to be part of this cause," Palacios said.

Marianas Variety donated $3,000 worth of advertising space. The newspaper's publisher Laila Boyer said, "We have been supporting the MMAC and Relay for Life. …We are planning on moving forward with them," Boyer said.

She also said that *Marianas Variety* has had booths and a team as well in the past and encourages community members to support the fight against cancer.

Marianas Pacific Distributors resident manager Guy Pudney said that they are happy to partner with MMAC. "We have been supporting for many years and this is the first year that I've been here that we actually made monetary contributions," Pudney said.

Pudney also noted that they support the MMAC on behalf of Marpac's operations manager, Phil Mendiola, who is a cancer survivor.

"Within the past four to five years we've actually lost two family members from my wife's side of the family. Cancer is a disease that affects everyone either directly or indirectly, and in one way or another we will support this cause," he said.

Manny Borja, 2014 MMAC overall committee chairman, was grateful for the three companies' contributions. "We are thankful that they have donated to the MMAC and they have been sponsors for awhile, and we are happy to be working together for the cause," Borja said.

The 2014 MMAC will be held on May 2 and May 3, 2014, from 6pm to 6am at the Hopwood Junior High School field in Chalan Piao.

For more information, contact Borja at 989-1987, email him at emanuel.borja@gmail.com, or visit the CCA website at www.ccamarianas.org. ***(Jayson Camacho)***

JAYSON CAMACHO

2014 Marianas March Against Cancer committee members, along with Commonwealth Cancer Association board members, pose at the *Marianas Variety* office after the newspaper company donated advertising space for the group.

JAYSON CAMACHO

Members of the 2014 Marianas March Against Cancer Committee and Commonwealth Cancer Association board members receive a $1,000 check from Marpac's operations manager Phil Mendiola, center, along with in-kind donations of beverages from Marpac's resident manager, Guy Pudney, standing fifth from left.

JAYSON CAMACHO

Sorensen Media Group's Power 99 is a title sponsor of the 2014 Marianas March Against Cancer, helping the cause through studio interviews and radio advertising.

Saipan native named Company M honor graduate

By CPL. MICHAEL WICK
12TH MARINE CORPS DISTRICT

MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT SAN DIEGO—The Depot trains the best and brightest West of the Mississippi River to earn the title few can claim, United States Marine. To be exact, more than 21,000 young men go through the grueling 13-weeks of training in Southern California to earn this prestigious title. At the end of those 13 weeks, a graduation ceremony is held to display the monumental transformation from civilian to Marine.

These men come from all around the western part of the United States, but unknown to most, recruits are shipped from U.S. territories such as Guam and Saipan as well. While the quantity of men and women recruited out of Recruiting Substation Guam is small, the quality shipped to recruit training is high. This high standard was exposed during the recent graduation where Lance Cpl. Nicko S. Salem, a native of Saipan recruited from RSS Guam, earned the title of company honor graduate for Company M aboard MCRD San Diego on April 25.

Salem's recruiter, Sgt. Gregoria D. Comea, RSS Guam, Recruiting Station Orange County, 12th Marine Corps District, said there was something special about Salem from day one.

"When I first met him, I knew he was going to be a good Marine," said Comea. "He always actively supported his parents, even when they were out of work. He would manage his busy schedule to care for them."

Salem said it was his family who motivated him to be successful throughout recruit training.

"My motivation came from my family back home," said Salem. "I come from a very small island which doesn't have much to offer, and I wanted to make the people back home proud. Something like this is a huge deal for us."

Although Salem's motivation came from family and friends, he credits Comea for always being there for him and preparing him for the tough road he was to embark upon.

"My recruiter helped me a lot with physical training," said Salem. "He was one of those people who motivated me to do well. He's about to get out of the Marine Corps, and he told me it would be great to see me become honor graduate before the day came."

Maj. James Dollard, commanding officer of RS Orange County, said he also saw Salem's potential during one of his visits to RSS Guam.

"He stood out, as all the poolees in Saipan do," said Dollard. "The standard out there is 40 dead hang pull ups, and they achieve it. Salem beat me in one of the initial strength test runs, which is only the second time a poolee beat me."

From the time Dollard met Salem, he told Salem he would attend his graduation ceremony because of what he saw in him.

"He is an absolute phenomenal guy," said Dollard. "He said he was hungry, he said he was going to do it before he did it, and he just came out here and performed."

Salem's next goal is to get an education using the benefits afforded to him by the Marine Corps.

"I want to make it a career," said Salem. "I want to use the skills, knowledge, and discipline instilled in me to do great things in the Marine Corps."

CPL. MICHAEL WICK

U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Nicko Salem, center, a native of Saipan, earns the title of company honorman for Company M at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, on April 25, 2014. Salem excelled over his peers in various tests of physical and mental challenges that he faced during boot camp.

A. Samoa store to pay $41,507 in back wages

O & O Inc., an American Samoa department store that also wholesales to smaller grocery and convenience stores, failed to pay the Fair Labor Standards Act's required minimum wage and overtime premium to 49 workers, the Wage and Hour Division found.

The investigation centered on the company's Nu'uuli village location for a period of two years, beginning in March 2012. The company, investigators said, paid "day rate" employees between $25 and $30 for eight-hour shifts, which did not equate to the American Samoa minimum wage of $4.60 per hour for the retail and wholesale industry. Employees also did not receive the premium pay for all hours worked in excess of 40 in a workweek.

The company endorsed an agreement to comply with FLSA requirements and to pay $41,507 in back wages. ***(USDOL)***

Pacific NCD crisis: Urgent action needed now

SUVA, Fiji—Pacific Directors of Health met yesterday to consider critical actions to respond to the non-communicable disease crisis in the Pacific. The topic is one of a number of issues discussed at the second Pacific Directors of Health meeting, which is being convened by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and regional partners in Nadi, Fiji today, April 30, 2014.

NCDs such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer account for about 70 percent of all deaths in the Pacific region, yet many are preventable.

Pacific Island countries and territories have some of the highest rates of diabetes in the world, with diabetes prevalence more than double the world average.

"The 10 countries in the world with the highest overweight and obesity rates are in the Pacific, as are almost all the 10 countries with the highest prevalence of diabetes in the world, and these are major drivers of NCDs. The region is struggling to cope with the burden on individuals, families, communities, health systems and Pacific economies and development more broadly," said Dr. Paula Vivili, deputy director at SPC's Public Health Division.

"Urgent action needs to be taken now. The good news is that there are proven, affordable and cost-effective strategies available," said Vivili.

SPC, the World Bank, World Health Organization, and the Pacific Islands Forum have been working with the governments of Australia and New Zealand to develop a detailed *NCD Roadmap Report* on a multisectoral country and regional response to the NCD Crisis in the Pacific, for consideration at the joint Forum Economic and Pacific Health Ministers Meeting in July 2014.

"Four key strategies include strengthening tobacco control, addressing and better regulating food and drink products linked to NCDs, improving efficiency by reallocating existing health resources to targeted primary and secondary prevention and treatment of heart disease and diabetes, and strengthening research and evidence for better planning," said Vivili.

The *NCD Roadmap Report* identifies 32 other multisectoral activities that Pacific governments could choose to adopt in their response to NCDs. These involve interventions from a range of ministries including the prime ministers' office as well as ministries of agriculture, education, health and trade. ***(Secretariat of the Pacific Community)***

SPC

A volleyball game in Port Vila, Vanuatu. Regular exercise helps prevent NCDs such as diabetes and heart disease.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The Russians are coming! No, seriously

The Russians are coming, the Russians are coming!

No, seriously, they are.

But instead of the hilarious landing on New England beaches depicted in the 1966 classic film, they are engaged in a deadly incursion into neighboring Ukraine.

Russia snatched the low-hanging fruit of Crimea with precision, thus protecting a crucial warm-water port. Now, its troops are moving into parts of eastern Ukraine.

To be sure, they affect the usual "who-us?" demeanor—as they did in Crimea—claiming Ukrainian chaos is simply an uprising of the people against an illegal government in Kiev. But make no mistake, this is a concerted effort that is at the least organized and orchestrated by the Russian government.

Vladimir Putin is on a mission to return Russia to its Soviet Union superpower status.

This movie actually began in 2008, when Russia's forces mauled neighboring Georgia in a war that lasted all of five days. Putin characterized it as protection of pro-Russian secessionists. Sound familiar?

Then, as now, the world knew better. But the prevailing political calculus in the U.S. and Europe—the only likely places with the collective muscle to punish Russia—was that Russia had grown too powerful and, besides, Georgia really wasn't worth the fight, be it economic or otherwise. Best not to poke the bear.

Putin then spent the next half decade and a huge portion of the national treasury focused on the 2014 Olympic Games in Sochi and the attention it would bring to Russia. Just as the Chinese in the 2008 Summer Games, Putin saw a tremendous opportunity to re-brand his nation for the world. But once the Games ended, he used a dispute he had manufactured as an excuse to swallow Crimea.

On Wednesday, the Ukrainian government ordered resumption of its own military operations against pro-Russian militants in the east after a political supporter was kidnapped and killed in Horlivka. Quite according to script, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov gravely warned in a TV interview that, "If we are attacked, we would certainly respond."

Here we go again. The European response has been timid as it worries that imposing economic sanctions will prompt a retaliatory loss of Russian gas, among other things. The U.S. response has been slightly better as it attempted targeted sanctions against Putin's close loyalists, but that simply isn't enough.

As a practical matter, economic sanctions are the only real weapon available, so they should be used to the fullest. Putin knows full well neither the U.S. nor Europe will go to war to save Ukraine.

The West must use the full extent of its economic power and be willing to accept some short-term blowback, if Russian expansionism is to be halted.

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HE SURVIVED THE NORMANDY LANDING
HE SURVIVED FALLUJAH
HE SURVIVED INCHON
HE SURVIVED TORA BORA
HE SURVIVED DA NANG
BUT HE DIDN'T SURVIVE THE V.A. HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN PHOENIX.

MSN *Titanic*, MV *Sewol*, MH370, and the Keystone XL

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com.

The sinking of the *Titanic* in the Atlantic was a wakeup call to humanity's pretense at invincibility. It sank with less than 37 percent survivors, though it had time to evacuate all its passengers. It just did not have enough lifeboats and vests to keep everyone afloat in the frigid waters, long enough for responding ships to rescue them.

China's CCTV movie channel chose to show the movie *Titanic* while the press was pointing to the similarity in the rate of casualties between the *Titanic* and the *Sewol* ferry that capsized a fortnight ago in its regular service from Incheon to Jeju in South Korea. There were four Chinese casualties in that voyage, the body of the fourth one finally recovered this week.

The MV *Sewol* revealed a big hole in SoKor's culture, regulatory practices, and its capacity to respond to disasters. PM Chung Hong-Won decried the seeming incapacity of the Rescue Office of the government and the "murderous" behavior of the crew, leaving a young 26-year-old inexperienced third mate at the helm while the boat was already tilting. Revelation has since been uncovered that the boat had less than a 1,000-ton load capacity of cargo but was actually carrying more than 3,000 tons, some of which were not secured in place that might have contributed to the boat's loss of equilibrium and eventual capsizing.

PM Chung reportedly blamed "deep-rooted evils" and societal irregularities for a tragedy that has left more than 300 people dead or missing and led to widespread shame, fury, and finger-pointing. In a national TV broadcast, he said: "There have been so many varieties of irregularities that have continued in every corner of our society and practices that have gone wrong. I hope these deep-rooted evils get corrected this time and this kind of accident never happens again."

I am familiar with many practices now called "corrupt" but taken for granted in the conduct of regulatory practices for they are in place as the norm rather than the exception in many governments, particularly the so-called "democratic" ones around the world.

A Bureau of Customs kin in the Philippines kept a humble domicile in Quezon City while a secretary so much lower in departmental rank than he was enriched herself managing the paperwork and signatures for freight needed in and out of South Harbor in Manila Bay, affording her a mansion in the suburbs.

I was asked several times as pastor of a local church congregation on Saipan to facilitate the purchase of a driver's license at MVO. The going grease money at the time was $350 and I was handed $500 to do the task. Not being moralistic here, since the practice of "facilitating" paperwork through regulatory channels was structured in Brazil, where offices that represented entities acted like lawyers were given 10 percent of any expenditure to get the job done, but to keep the function in the informal sector only made corruption a normal practice.

The EDSA revolution that ousted President Marcos, mercilessly dubbed as the conjugal kleptocracy with Imelda, might have had ideological sentiments, but members of the Makati business community I knew were livid when the cost of getting papers out of the President's control reached 35 percent of expenditure. A first lady was dubbed "Madame 15 percent" for the rate of her facilitating similar efforts in Indonesia later.

The seasoned 68-year-old ship captain apologized profusely for the loss of life and will be criminally prosecuted for his role as the captain of the ship; he was one of the first to abandon ship. It is quite understandable that he might have been disoriented when he bumped into a glass door in his haste to get to the bridge but Chung's blanket charge is a welcome breath of fresh air!

In the *Titanic,* the captain and even the architect of the newly rebuilt transatlantic liner chose to sink with their vessel, so PM Chung's resignation is understandable. So was the suicide committed by the vice principal chaperone to 325 students in the *Sewol* ferry. Not so with Malaysian officials responding to queries from MH370 families of passengers who could not get a single gesture of humility, let alone a sense of accountability. The plane's disappearance, notwithstanding multinational effort with the latest in search technology, remains buried in deep mystery as no trace of it is yet to be located. Malaysian hierarchy, however, remains uppity in their public appearances.

I attend a reflective week in Texas this summer. One of the regular attendees will not be there. He is busy flinging his 85-year-old body into the barbwires of history, protesting plans to build the Keystone XL pipeline for the gooey tar sands from Alberta into the Gulf of Mexico. Coincidentally, I will also be in Alberta for another meeting where I expect most of my Canuck colleagues to toe the familiar line of Obama's WH being anti-labor with the announcement that permission to build the pipeline is on hold, possibly until after the mid-term election for members of the U.S. Congress.

The "m" on "steam" is defining our merry month of May!

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

When China spits

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.*

As President Obama makes his Southeast Asian swing, someone likens it to his checking what occurs in the region when China flexes her muscles. It is best said in an adage, "When China spits, everybody swims!"

Hey! Hey! Hey! Even we volunteered to jump off our rescue boat yelling at the iceberg before us, "We'd approve casino and everything else you wish." Humiliating, though, that we do it with servility or like slaves of rich and powerful folks nearby as to grandly ignore fiduciary duties.

When investors spit on our face

While everybody's swimming confused, some are swimming upstream by telling lies about their HK and Macau trip. It is rumored that some potential investors are linked to organized crime or triad in Macau. There's material that would validate suspicion on this very interesting point.

Reportedly, the governor said that they are hiring experts from Macau because the casino industry there is different from Vegas. Wrong! Why do you think China sought assistance from the Nevada Gaming Commission to set up operations and investments in Macau? Is it because it trusts the host group?

Furthermore, it is rumored that our Macau trip was taken via a private jet. Whose private jet is it, folks and would you like to revise your trip report?

The report in hand grants any person of decent reading comprehension to see that this administration and legislators tried fancy footing about people they've met to cover their tracks, only to stumble with bigger lies!

I will explain this mess upon completing a critical review of the report. It is more the reasons why the Latin term "gravitas," meaning "integrity to leadership," becomes most critical as we consider preventing the introduction of organized crime and corruption into the island.

Exercise in futility on energy

Recently, a bunch of legislators attended a conference in Guam on liquefied natural gas, otherwise known as "snake oil." With their trip and per diem paid for by the taxpayers, are we supposed to see a decrease in power bills in the near future from the use of LNG?

Indeed, power companies throughout the world are converting to LNG because it is cheap, the supply is limitless, and the sources close enough to make it economical. None of these measures apply to the CNMI. LNG experts have candidly told Guam that snake oil is not the most economical or efficient option for islands situated in the middle of the Pacific.

Issues like storage and regasification terminal requirements must be addressed, especially the cost involved to set it up on the islands—all three islands—so there's plenty of it at all times. Guam needs to spend about $800 million on storage in addition to ascertaining that all activities come to a full stop when an LNG ship enters the harbor.

Have we explored joint use of the Tanapag Harbor with the military? Or is this an issue to ignore from the outset as we settle, once more, using our outmoded television over vision? It's all designed to meet EPA standards.

But then an educated observer offered that Guam should get out of the EPA "guillotine before our epitaph reads: "The operation was a success but the patient died." Woe!

The battery system facility

With newly improved battery system, wind power ought to do the CNMI a whale of good. We could look forward to reliable, stable, and economical power system. How do we back up wind turbine power generation?

"Advanced lead acid batteries provided 10,000 megawatt-hours of on demand electricity to the Electric Rehabilitation Council of Texas grid in the last 15 months," according to an article on energy in the *Biz Journals.*

"The batteries can respond to grid conditions in seconds by harnessing electricity from the nearby 153 megawatt wind farm. The success of the Energy's 36 megawatt Notrees Wind and Battery Storage project in West Texas could lead to even more utility battery storage projects in Texas and across the country.

"The speed and accuracy of the system's response during the pilot confirmed the benefits of the Notrees Battery Storage project and ERCOT has made it a permanent market service. The batteries can stabilize the voltage on the grid, provide power during periods of peak demand or absorb power from the wind turbines when it's not needed."

Solar is expensive!

Firstly, the islands suffer daily from what's known as "cloud cover." It means clouds roll over the islands and cuts sunlight from hitting solar panels consistently.

Secondly, households must spend anywhere between $8,000 and $15,000 per solar panel and installation. But why would you venture into an unreliable system that would cost you an arm and a leg?

At day's end, it would cost you as much as your current power bills run by fossil fuel. Is it worth the trouble and investment if efficiency is reduced to 18 percent?

Would geothermal work in earthquake-prone isles? You can read up how Japan has slowly moved away and into wind turbine. There's fear of the system completely shutting down when the Earth crushes pipes lowered to harness heat from thousands of feet below the Earth.

So what has leadership done to effect major policy on alternative energy? More than four years of second-guessing the future doing nothing except procrastination fueled by the lack of political resolve to begin lowering the high cost of power.

Planning for the future

In doing the right thing by doing it right, most admirable is the open position taken by Rep. Roman Benavente voting against the casino law. He acknowledges the voice of his people and that an issue of such magnitude is best decided by securing the disposition found in the "will of the people."

As more folks read the casino law, the more it reveals its humiliating inherent shortsightedness. Benavente is correct that the issue belongs to the people and must therefore be given their right to dispose of it.

Pistorius, Zuma: Is this really the best South Africa can do?

By MARK GEVISSER
LOS ANGELES TIMES

In South Africa today, as the country celebrates the 20th anniversary of its democracy and prepares for elections, two deeply flawed folk heroes—one venal, the other violent—have commandeered the headlines. The president, Jacob Zuma, was recently found by the Public Protector, an independent constitutional body, to have misappropriated $20 million to upgrade his private home. And Oscar Pistorius, a double amputee who awed the world with his speed running on prosthetic legs, is being tried for murder in the killing of his girlfriend.

With Nelson Mandela dead and his African National Congress increasingly troubled, Pistorius and Zuma have, distressingly, become the poster boys for South Africa's 20 Years of Freedom celebrations.

Both men have been breathtaking in their perseverance and achievement. Zuma stopped a bloody civil war in his home province of KwaZulu-Natal. And, as an undereducated peasant who has risen to the very top, he stands as a symbol to black South Africans that they can be masters of their own destiny. Similarly, Pistorius transforms our understanding of what "able-bodied" means, even in the way he strides up to the dock.

But both men also seem to have fallen victim to the underdog's sense of moral exceptionalism: They are right while everybody else is wrong. In this closed circle, so brutally exposed during the cross-examination of Pistorius in court this month, any criticism just reaffirms to them that they are underdogs and that they thus have to fight harder—and perhaps dirtier—to survive.

Something has happened, though, these last few weeks, first with the release of the Public Protector's report on Zuma, and now with the Pistorius trial. As the public dramas have played out, both men have forfeited their victim status, and we may never be able to understand them as underdogs again.

If everyday chatter and call-ins to the radio talk shows are anything to go by, there is not much sympathy left for Pistorius in South Africa. This is, in part, because he stands accused of trying to justify the killing of his girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp by abusing a legitimate fear with which all South Africans live: the fear of criminal violence and home invasion.

Public opinion about Zuma is more difficult to gauge. He was booed at Mandela's memorial service in December, and several senior comrades have left the ANC because of him. There are no published polls measuring his popularity against that of the ANC, but many of the party's leaders admit privately that an increasing number of their constituents will be voting for the party in spite of, rather than because of, its president. Still, the ANC will trounce the opposition once more in national elections scheduled for May 7 (just two days after the Pistorius trial resumes in Pretoria).

There are many reasons for this loyalty to the ANC, ranging from an atavistic adherence to the liberation movement to the fact that most South Africans' lives have improved since the end of apartheid. Whether at the upper end, through affirmative action tenders, or at the lower end, through state pensions and child grants, millions of South Africans are dependent on the ANC government. Few are willing to bite the hand that feeds them.

There has also not been, until now, a credible black-led opposition. That is changing, and it will be interesting to watch on May 7 how well the demagogic populist Julius Malema's Economic Freedom Fighters fare. Expelled from the ANC, Malema is a classic underdog in the Zuma vein: Undereducated and weaned in the struggle, he lives by his wits and has appetites that supersede his means. He will draw support away from his former mentor, at least in part because some voters need a new underdog to back now that Zuma has shed this skin.

Meanwhile, the Pistorius trial courses through the electoral season like a foul river, carrying the country's legacies of fear and violence on its currents. These legacies include an unspeakably high level of violent crime—and a contempt for the law and a culture of impunity that spools down from the top, exemplified as much by Zuma's home improvements as by Pistorius' guns.

And yet here she is, firm but empathetic, presiding over the Pistorius trial: Judge Thokozile Masipa. And here too is South Africa's Public Protector: Thuli Madonsela, who had the courage to stand up against the president and his bullying henchmen. The fact that these two black women have constitutionally vested power in South Africa today—the one a highly competent judge, the other a fearless anti-corruption crusader—says much about how far the country has come in the two decades since I voted for the first time, for Nelson Mandela.

These are the real poster girls for the South African democracy.

Justice will be done.

Mark Gevisser's new book is Lost and Found in Johannesburg: A Memoir. *He wrote this for the* Los Angeles Times.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Kasse no?

I titled this article as *kasse no*? As in CasiNo. *Kasse* means tease in Chamorro. So the title is understood as *tease right?* The reason being that the law is flawed in its entirety. What the proponents of the casino failed to understand is that the casino dream does not happen overnight. Let's imagine that it had become a reality. It will take many stages until its completion. The Retirement Fund may be closed by the time of its completion. Meaning the initial $2 million deposit was a bonus! Now if the Saipan gaming commission rejects both investors, then it opens the doors for a new titan investor. At this point, you may already know whom I am talking about. The partners for this venture will surely make their money first. The partners get the cake, the lawmakers get the pie, and we get the crumbs. Sorry folks but I am with Ambrose on this one. I see his logic.

The bill is custom-made for one investor. Have we already forgotten that a casino consultant from Hong Kong explained that it's stiff competition due to the proximity of Macau? And how many tourists do you expect will play in the casino? This kind of entertainment is only made for a certain group who likes gaming. Tourists are here with their families for leisure. I believe a mega mall is much suitable. It is a friendly environment that entices both tourist and locals far and wide. The best part of it, it's for the young and old to enjoy as it will serve as a major attraction day and night. A place for us to go to since the La Fiesta Mall closed its doors.

It's shameful to have our island billed as a mecca for gambling and other ill-related activities that may soon follow. Which brings me to coin another word: "para-dice!" So are we an island paradise or para-dice? The mayor and MVA must step up efforts promoting our island in full gear and block this evil entity that would taint the face of the place we call home.

Vincent G. Cabrera
Chalan Piao, Siapan

The Weather

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly sunny with isolated showers. Southwest winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼75°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°

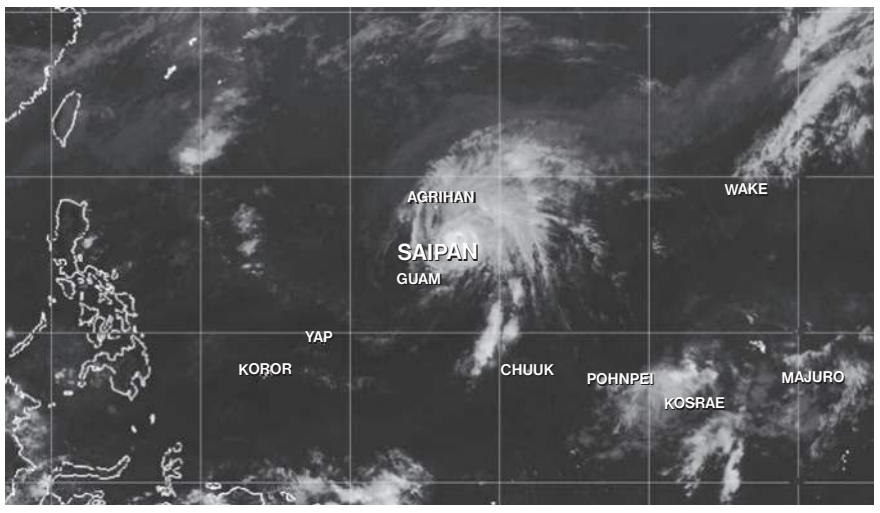
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲84	▼78
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲82	▼80
Yap	Sunny	▲82	▼80
Chuuk	Showers	▲83	▼81
Pohnpei	Showers	▲82	▼79
Kosrae	Showers	▲82	▼79
Majuro	Showers	▲83	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲65	▼49
Beijing	Sunny	▲88	▼56
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	▲78	▼72
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲81	▼69
London	Sunny	▲67	▼50
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲92	▼64
Manila	Sunny	▲84	▼77
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲61	▼42
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲87	▼77
New York	Rain	▲50	▼49
Osaka	Showers	▲74	▼59
Paris	Drizzle	▲66	▼50
Pusan	Showers	▲68	▼50
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲70	▼53
Salem	Mostly Sunny	▲78	▼48
San Francisco	Sunny	▲75	▼55
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲68	▼51
Tokyo	Rain	▲64	▼63
Washington, DC	Thunderstorms	▲72	▼64

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, APRIL 29, 2014
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Typhoon Tapah (06W) is centered 130 miles east of Saipan near 15.7N147.4E. Tapah is moving northward at about 8 mph with maximum winds of 75 mph. Numerous showers and thunderstorms are seen within 90 miles of the center with scattered showers and thunderstorms extending 200 miles to the north and east of the center. For more information on Typhoon Tapah, see bulletins issued by the Joint Typhoon Warning Center under WMO header WTPN31 PGTW and advisories issued by the National Weather Service on Guam under WMO header WTPQ31 PGUM. A line of convergence into Typhoon Tapah with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms is located to the northwest of Chuuk within 100 miles of a line from 6N148E to 13N152E. A cold front extends southwestward from 25N167E to just northwest of Typhoon Tapah at 17N143E. Cloudiness, scattered showers and a few Thunderstorms are occurring along and up to 250 miles north of this boundary. A surface trough is located just north of Kosrae from 3N161E to 10N166E. Cloudiness and isolated showers are found east of Pohnpei within 110 miles of a line from 5N157E to 8N165E and southeast of Kosrae within 110 miles of a line from 1N162E to 5N168E. Another surface trough can be seen east of Majuro from 9N173E to 6N175E. Cloudiness and isolated showers are found 200 miles west of a line from 2N172E to 6N175E to 8N174E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

3:22 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.8 Feet
8:38 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
3:43 PM	Today	Low Tide:	-0.3 Feet
10:20 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	5:54 AM	6:34 PM
Thursday	5:54 AM	6:35 PM
Friday	5:53 AM	6:35 PM
Saturday	5:53 AM	6:35 PM
Sunday	5:53 AM	6:35 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:29 AM	7:30 PM
Thursday	7:17 AM	8:24 PM
Friday	8:07 AM	9:16 PM
Saturday	8:57 AM	10:05 PM
Sunday	9:47 AM	10:52 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF APRIL 2, 2014

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA5070	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA5068	8:00am	8:50am	3
UA5068	8:40am	9:30am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5078	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	6:55pm	8:35pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA5038	7:45pm	8:35pm	2, 6
UA5078	8:10pm	9:00pm	3

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA5038	5:35pm	6:10pm	2, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA5038	6:40pm	7:15pm	2, 6

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:05am	8:45am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
DL297	4:30pm	7:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ604	3:30pm	6:55pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	4:00am	8:00am	1, 5

SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701	2:20am	11:05am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:50am	11: 05am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5070/191	4:15am	8:55am	3, 6, 7 via GUM
DL287/473	6:05am	10:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via NRT
UA5068/183	8:00am	9:10pm	3 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	8:45pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:10pm	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:30pm	10:45pm	Daily via ICN

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ606/721	2:20am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5068/179	8:00am	9:55pm	3 via GUM
UA5078/179	3:10pm	9:55pm	1, 5, 6 via GUM
OZ604/749	3:30pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA5069	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA5071	6:40am	7:30am	3
UA5071	7:15am	8:05am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5077	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	5:35pm	6:25pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA5038	5:35pm	7:15pm	2, 6 via Rota
UA5077	6:50pm	7:40pm	3

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA5039	6:55pm	7:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA5039	8:00pm	8:35pm	1, 4, 5, 7

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:55pm	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ603	8:50am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ605	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ605	8:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	7:20pm	3:00am+1	4, 7

GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

DL172/288	7:45am	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7 via NRT
UA190/5039	9:55am	6:25pm	7 via Guam
UA190/5038	9:55am	7:15pm	6 via Rota-Guam
UA190/5077	9:55am	7:40pm	3 via Guam
OZ702/605	12:15pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ702/605	12:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
UA184/5071	10:25pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
UA184/5038	10:25pm	7:15pm+1	1 via Rota-Guam
UA184/5071	11:30pm	7:30am+1	2 via Guam
UA184/5038	11:30pm	7:15pm+1	5 via Rota-Guam

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/605	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:10pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA180/5071	9:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air; SYL: Yakutia Air; D: Dynamic Airways; ORB: OREN AIR.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

Business

Minimum wage approaches likely Senate rejection

WASHINGTON (AP)—The push by President Barack Obama and Senate Democrats to raise the federal minimum wage seems ready to join the parade of issues that gets buried in Congress but—the party hopes—propels voters to the polls this November.

Immigration. Renewing expired jobless benefits. Tighter curbs on guns. All of them Obama priorities. All of them attracting some Republican support. And all of them tripped up, at least for now, by GOP opposition.

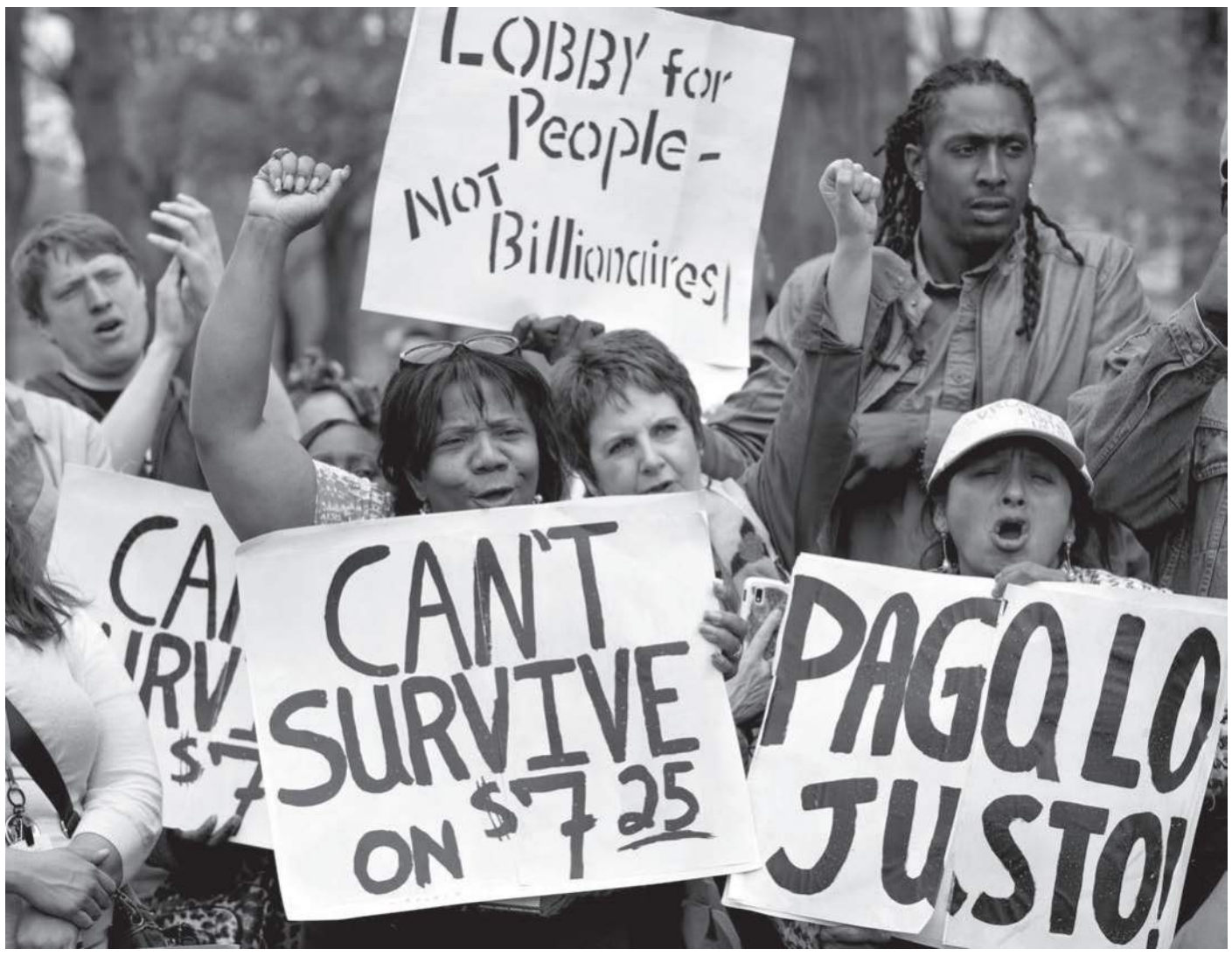
And now, a bill by Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, boosting today's $7.25 hourly minimum in three steps until it hits $10.10 as soon as 2016. His minimum wage bill is widely expected to join that list Wednesday, when the Senate seems poised to vote on it.

Though it should win backing from nearly all of the 53 Democrats and two Democratic-leaning independents, few Republicans are expected to join them, likely leaving them shy of the needed 60 votes to begin debate.

On Monday, Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., told reporters he will probably vote to let the Senate consider the bill. That made him the first GOP senator to publicly take that stance, though he also said he would oppose the legislation on final passage.

"On the issue of wages for Americans, I don't know why you wouldn't want to debate that," he said.

Democrats are aware of the bill's likely fate. But they also know that according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, women and young people make up disproportionate portions of the 3.3 million people who earned $7.25 or less last year.



AP

Low-wage workers rally on Capitol Hill in Washington, Monday, April 28, 2014, to urge Congress to raise the minimum wage as lawmakers return to Washington following a two week hiatus.

Resist temptation to blame co-worker for job exit

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By MARIE G. MCINTYRE
McClatchy-Tribune News Service

Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of "Secrets to Winning at Office Politics." Send in questions and get free coaching tips at http://www.yourofficecoach.com, or follow her on Twitter @ officecoach.

QUESTION: About a year ago, I quit my job in a small medical clinic because of a very unprofessional co-worker. "Jake" dressed inappropriately, accepted gifts from vendors, had an affair with a married patient, and sent sexual emails from our shared computers. The owner knew about Jake's behavior, but he did nothing to stop it.

Although I liked my job, working with Jake became so frustrating that I decided to leave. Now I'm ready to return to work, but I don't know how to describe my reason for quitting. Saying "I just needed a change" seems wrong when the real problem was an unprofessional workplace and incompetent management.

ANSWER: While it might be emotionally satisfying to "punish" your former boss by trashing him during a job interview, such comments will automatically cause interviewers to wonder if you were part of the problem. Lacking the means to validate your story, they may choose to avoid a potentially risky hire by simply eliminating you from the pool.

When asked to describe your departure, therefore, you must formulate a truthful response which does not include any criticism of your unpleasant colleague or ineffectual manager. The fact that you chose not to work during the past year provides one possible approach.

For example: "Although I enjoyed my clinic duties, I decided to spend this year devoting more time to my family. I believe that was a good choice, but now I'm really looking forward to going back to work. I was excited to learn about this position because I feel my skills would be a good fit."

When talking with interviewers, applicants should remember two things. First, there can be many honest answers to the same question. And second, they should keep any negative opinions to themselves.

■■■

Q: For quite a while, I have worked at night and attended graduate school during the day. After I receive my degree in about a year, I hope to escape third shift and move into a management position with my company.

The problem is that all the events which could help me meet the "right" people are held in the daytime. Since these usually conflict with my class schedule, I find it difficult to participate. How else can I connect with higher-level managers?

A: Considering that you work all night, attend school during the day, and presumably sleep from time to time, I doubt there's much room in your schedule for networking activities. If you spread yourself too thin, exhaustion may adversely affect your job performance and damage your career prospects, so try to focus on one step at a time.

Once your diploma is in hand, you will have more time and energy for making key connections. In the meantime, the best way to facilitate a promotion is to impress your third-shift bosses. While the movers and shakers may be more available during the day, the people who can recommend you for advancement are right there with you every night.

Toyota moving US base from California to Texas

TORRANCE, Calif. (AP)—Toyota delivered a surprise pink slip to California on Monday, announcing the company would move its U.S. headquarters and about 3,000 jobs from the Los Angeles suburbs to the outskirts of Dallas.

The world's largest automaker will keep a foothold in the Golden State—about 2,300 jobs will remain in California after the company settles into its new corporate campus in Plano, Texas. But the announcement is an economic and symbolic slap for California, a historic center of American car culture that has been trying to shake its reputation as a frustrating place to run a business, whether that involves shooting a film or selling a Prius.

"When you look at the whole package, it's difficult to be a business here," lamented Torrance Mayor Frank Scotto, whose community on the edge of the Pacific will suffer as the jobs migrate to Texas.

"If all these great, high-end jobs are leaving California, then we are going to turn into a place that's a retirement community" with low-paying service-sector jobs, Scotto said. "We can't have that," he added, warning that unless the state has a change of attitude, "it's going to be way too late."

Toyota's announcement comes about two months after Occidental Petroleum Corp. disclosed it was moving its headquarters to Houston from Los Angeles. Texas Gov. Rick Perry has been on a publicity campaign to promote his state as a haven for businesses seeking lower taxes and eased government regulation, but Toyota didn't mention what, if any, role Perry played in the company's decision.

Perry, who made two visits to California to lure employers to his state, said Texas offered Toyota $40 million in incentives from the taxpayer-funded Texas Enterprise Fund. The Republican governor said Toyota is expected to invest $300 million in the new headquarters.

Advertisers back away from NBA's LA Clippers

NEW YORK (AP)—Advertisers are backing away from the Los Angeles Clippers after racist comments attributed to the NBA team's owner.

Mercedes-Benz USA said Monday its dealerships are ending their sponsorship of the Clippers in the wake of comments allegedly made by the team's owner, Donald Sterling. Used car dealership chain CarMax, airline Virgin America, and the Chumash Casino Resort are doing the same.

Four other sponsors, Kia Motors America, energy drink maker Red Bull, hardwood flooring retailer Lumber Liquidators and Yokohama Tire, said they are suspending their advertising and sponsorship activities with the team. Yet another sponsor, insurer State Farm, said it "will be taking a pause in our relationship with the organization."

The Clippers declined to comment.

The incident highlights the risks that companies face when they make sponsorship deals. The deals can bring goodwill when things are going well, but brands face a tough spot when they link themselves with teams or athletes that become mired in controversy. Advertising experts say that once the bad news it out there, a negative association could have already been made in the eyes of consumers.

Allen Adamson, managing director of research firm Landor Associates, said there's little benefit for brands to stick with their sponsorship deals in this instance.

"There's some benefit in moving quickly," he said. "You can always renew your sponsorship later, but the longer you're linking your brand to a brand in trouble, the higher the risk."

Nation

Tornadoes kill at least 17 in US

VILONIA, Arkansas (AP)—Emergency officials were searching for survivors Monday in the debris left by a powerful tornado that carved a huge path of destruction through several Midwestern and Southern states including Arkansas, where at least 15 people were killed.

The tornado that slammed into a town about 10 miles (16 kilometers) west of the Arkansas state capital of Little Rock on Sunday evening, killing at least 15 people, grew to about half a mile (800 meters) wide and was among a rash of tornadoes and heavy storms that rumbled across the center and south of the U.S. overnight, ending a lull in violent weather across America with a fury. The National Weather Service warned that more tornadoes, damaging winds and very large hail would strike in parts of Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee and Louisiana on Monday.

It was among a rash of twisters and violent storms across the Midwest and South that killed 17 people in all on Sunday.

On Monday, tornados flattened homes and businesses and flipped trucks over on highways, killing two people in Alabama and one in Mississippi.

Most of the dead in Arkansas were killed in their homes in and around Vilonia, population 3,800. Firefighters on Monday searched for anyone trapped amid the piles of splintered wood and belongings strewn across yards. Hospitals took in more than 100 patients.

The tornado that hit the town and nearby Mayflower was probably the nation's strongest so far this year on the 0-to-5 EF scale, with the potential to be at least an EF3, which means winds greater than 136 mph, National Weather Service meteorologist Jeff Hood said.

AP

Damage shows the path of tornado through Quapaw, Okla., Monday, April 28, 2014. The tornado was among a rash of tornadoes and heavy storms that rumbled across the center and south of the country overnight.

It wrecked cars and trucks along Interstate 40 north of Little Rock. Also among the ruins was a new $14 million intermediate school that had been set to open this fall.

A meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Arkansas said he was virtually certain the storm that hit the towns of Vilonia and nearby Mayflower would be rated as America's strongest twister to date this year.

Meteorologist Jeff Hood said the storm could have been an EF3, with winds greater than 136 mph (218 kph). He said officials are studying the environmental impact.

Storm ratings for Sunday's twisters were not immediately available. Before Sunday, the U.S. had not had a tornado rated EF3 or higher since Nov. 17, a streak of 160 days, the fourth-longest on record. This also would be the latest date for a storm rated EF3 or higher. The previous latest big storm for a year was March 31, 2002.

Another twister killed a person in Oklahoma before crossing into Kansas to the north. A suspected tornado also struck in northwest Louisiana.

The Arkansas twister shredded cars and trucks along Interstate 40, the main corridor north of Little Rock. After the storm passed, big trucks tried to navigate through the damage as gawkers captured photos of the destruction.

Late Sunday, emergency workers and volunteers went door-to-door checking for victims and survivors.

Becky Naylor, 57, of Mayflower, said up to 22 people "packed like sardines" into her storm cellar as the tornado approached.

"People were pulling off the highways and were just running in," said Naylor.

Men held the cellar doors tight to prevent the tornado from ripping them apart.

"It sounded like a constant rolling, roaring sound," she said. "Trees were really bending and the light poles were actually shaking and moving. That's before we shut the door and we've only shut the door to the storm cellar two times."

The other time was in 2011, during an EF-2 tornado that followed nearly the same path and killed at least four people.

More deadly storm activity

At least 18 people have died since Sunday due to severe weather as large storm fronts spawning tornadoes have moved east.

○ Tornadoes reported April 27 ■ Tornadoes reported April 28

April 27

1. One killed as result of storms
2. Tornado hit about 5:45 p.m., one person killed in Quapaw; crossed into Kansas; 60-70 homes destroyed in Baxter Springs, 20 businesses
3. Tornado touched down around 7 p.m.; grew to be about half a mile wide; at least 9 fatalities in Vilonia; others killed across the state

April 28

4. Winston Medical Center damaged by tornado; large number of injuries, gas leak reported
5. Several buildings reported destroyed, including in a major commercial area on north side of city; early reports of many injuries here as well

Source: National Weather Service, Reuters

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Survivors tell their stories: 'We are safe here'

A powerful storm system was menacing a large swath of the South early Tuesday, killing more than two dozen people from Arkansas to Alabama over more than two days of destruction. Here are the some stories from people in Mississippi and Alabama that made it through the frightening chaos.

■■■

After the tornado pounced on Tupelo, Miss., one gas station looked as if it had been stepped on by a giant. Francis Gonzalez owns a convenience store and Mexican restaurant attached to that station. Gonzalez, her three children and two employees ducked for cover in the store's cooler shortly after a cellphone blared a tornado warning.

In the nick of time. Within seconds, the wind picked up and glass shattered. The roof over the gas pumps was reduced to aluminum shards. A nearby SUV had its windows blown out. The storefront window had a large hole in it. Debris lay everywhere.

"It took us by surprise," Gonzalez said in Spanish. Stunned by the destruction all around, she added: "My Lord, how can all this happen in just one second?"

■■■

NBC affiliate WTVA-TV chief meteorologist Matt Laubhan in Tupelo, Miss., was reporting live on severe weather about 3 p.m. when he realized the twister was coming close enough that maybe he and his staff should abandon the TV studio.

"This is a tornado ripping through the city of Tupelo as we speak. And this could be deadly," he said in a video widely tweeted and broadcast on YouTube.

Moments later he adds, "A damaging tornado. On the ground. Right now." The video then showed Laubhan peeking in from the side to see if he was still live on the air before yelling to staff off-camera to get down in the basement.

"Basement, now!" he yelled, before disappearing off camera himself.

Later, the station tweeted, "We are safe here."

■■■

At the Winston County Medical Center in Louisville, Miss., Dr. Michael Henry, head of the emergency room, didn't expect a tornado at such close quarters.

"We thought we were going to be OK. Then a guy came in and said, `It's here right now.' Then boom ... it blew through," Henry recalled.

The fierce winds knocked down two walls. The emergency room and an outpatient clinic, at the back of the hospital, bore the brunt of the wind damage. The 27-bed hospital also was pocked with holes in its roof and water damage, dimly lit when it kicked over to generator power.

Fifteen patients were in hospital rooms at the time. Eight or nine were in the emergency room, but staff said no one died. Doctors relocated to a former operating room and sent some patients to other hospitals.

■■■

Sennaphie Yates of Louisville, Miss., said her grandfather had been taken to the Winston County Medical Center after a fainting spell. She said she and family members arrived at the hospital to check on him just before the tornado hit.

Yates said hospital workers herded people into a hallway. "They had all of us against the wall and gave us pillows. They said `get down and ... don't get up,'" she said.

Yates said the worst of it lasted three, maybe five minutes. Then the storm passed. Afterward, she and family members stayed with her grandfather for hours until hospital officials cleared him to go home.

ACROSS THE NATION

Ohio to increase lethal injection drug dosages

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)—Ohio said Monday it's boosting the dosages of its lethal injection drugs even as it stands by the January execution of an inmate who made snorting and gasping sounds that led to a civil rights lawsuit by his family and calls for a moratorium. The state's new policy considerably increases the amount of the sedative used in its two-drug combination and raises the amount of the painkiller, which are injected simultaneously, according to a court filing. The state said it was making the changes "to allay any remaining concerns" after the last execution. The Department of Rehabilitation and Correction said its review of the Jan. 16 execution of Dennis McGuire determined he was asleep and unconscious a few minutes after the drugs were administered and his execution was conducted in a constitutional manner.

Mob associate who became Idaho rancher sentenced

BOSTON (AP)—A Boston mob associate who spent years on the lam in Idaho as a cattle rancher was sentenced to 28 years in prison Monday in a string of federal crimes, including the 1989 attempted murder of a man who later became the boss of the New England Mafia. Enrico Ponzo was convicted in November in the attempted killing of Francis "Cadillac Frank" Salemme. He plans to appeal his sentence. Ponzo fled Massachusetts in 1994 and initially lived in Arizona, where, prosecutors said, he helped manage a marijuana trafficking organization. He later settled in the small farm town of Marsing, Idaho, where he built a home with his longtime girlfriend and became a cattle rancher and stay-at-home father known as Jay Shaw.

NY lawmaker charged with fraud, cites 'witch hunt'

NEW YORK (AP)—Republican U.S. Rep. Michael Grimm, a former Marine and FBI agent who's been the target of a campaign finance investigation, was instead charged on Monday with evading taxes by concealing more than $1 million in sales and wages while running a small Manhattan restaurant—a case he called a political witch hunt meant to drive him out of office. Grimm surrendered to FBI agents early Monday following a two-year investigation that initially focused on alleged attempts to bypass contribution limits. He pleaded not guilty through his lawyer in federal court in Brooklyn to mail, wire and tax fraud charges and was released on $400,000 bond secured by his Staten Island home. The lawmaker, using a World War II memorial across the street from the courthouse as a backdrop, later accused prosecutors of leaking "all kinds of innuendos and accusations to support a political witch hunt" intended to "assassinate my character." He vowed to return to work in Congress while fighting the charges.

Asia

Obama vigorously defends foreign policy record

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—President Barack Obama vigorously defended his foreign policy record Monday, arguing that his cautious approach to global problems has avoided the type of missteps that contributed to a "disastrous" decade of war for the United States.

Obama's expansive comments came at the end of a weeklong Asia trip that exposed growing White House frustration with critics who cast the president as weak and ineffectual on the world stage. The president and his advisers get particularly irked by those who seize on Obama's decision to pull back from a military strike in Syria and link it with virtually every other foreign policy challenge, from Russia's threatening moves in Ukraine to China's increasing assertiveness in Asia's territorial disputes.

"Why is it that everybody is so eager to use military force after we've just gone through a decade of war at enormous costs to our troops and to our budget?" Obama said during a news conference in the Philippines.

Summing up his foreign policy philosophy, Obama said it was one that "avoids errors."

White House advisers argue in part that Obama's approach puts him on the side of a conflict-weary American public, some of whom voted for him in the 2008 election because of his early opposition to the Iraq war. Yet the president's foreign policy record of late has provided plenty of fodder for his critics.

It was Obama's own declaration that Syria's chemical weapons use would cross his "red line" that raised the stakes for a U.S. response when Syrian leader Bashar Assad launched an attack last summer. The Obama administration's own drumbeat toward a U.S. strike only fueled the narrative that the president was indecisive or didn't have the stomach for an attack when he abruptly pulled back, first in favor of a vote in Congress, then to strike a deal with Syria and Russia that aimed to rid the Assad regime of its chemical weapons stockpiles.

The Syria scenario has trickled into Obama's relationship with Asia, where anxious allies spent much of the last week seeking assurances from the president that he would have their back if China used military force to take the advantage in the region's numerous territorial disputes. And Russian President Vladimir Putin's flouting of Western sanctions in response to his alleged provocations in Ukraine has stirred fresh criticism that the president's strategy lacks teeth.

That line of thinking was evident Monday after the Obama administration announced new sanctions on seven Russian officials, as well 17 companies with ties to Putin. Sen. Kelly Ayotte, a Republican from New Hampshire who has been a frequent Obama foreign policy critic, called the measures "tepid," "incremental" and "insufficient." Other GOP lawmakers have called on Obama to provide lethal assistance to the Ukrainian military, a prospect he roundly rejected once again Monday.

AP

President Barack Obama, left, and Philippine President Benigno Aquino III participate in a bilateral meeting at Malacanang Palace in Manila, the Philippines, Monday, April 28, 2014.

North Korea says it will conduct live-fire drills

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea notified rival South Korea on Tuesday that it planned a live-fire drill near the countries' disputed western sea boundary, a possible indication of rising frustration in Pyongyang as it unsuccessfully pushes for outside aid.

South Korean Defense Ministry spokesman Kim Min-seok told reporters that military officials would closely monitor the drills. Last month, South Korea fired artillery shells into the North's waters after North Korean shells from a live-fire drill landed south of the disputed sea boundary.

Both Koreas regularly conduct artillery drills in the Yellow Sea. Analysts have said that Pyongyang's announcements of live-fire drill plans are an expression of frustration by the impoverished country at making little progress in a recent push to win outside aid.

The drills are sensitive because they are staged near a disputed maritime line separating the countries. The so-called Northern Limit Line was drawn by the U.S.-led U.N. Command without Pyongyang's consent at the close of the 1950-53 Korean War, which ended with a truce, not a peace treaty, leaving the peninsula still technically in a state of war. North Korea routinely argues that the line should run farther south.

A year after threatening each other with war, the Koreas had restored some trust and held reunions earlier this year of families divided by the war. But ties have since steadily soured. Pyongyang this week launched a sexist rhetorical attack on President Park Geun-hye, calling her to a "despicable prostitute."

North Korea test-fired two medium-range ballistic missiles in March into the Sea of Japan. Pyongyang had earlier staged a series of shorter-range rocket launches to protest annual springtime military drills by the U.S. and South Korea that Pyongyang says are invasion preparation.

South Korean officials have also warned the North could be preparing for its fourth nuclear test.

Air search for missing Malaysian plane called off

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—The aerial search for the missing Malaysia Airlines jet was called off Monday, and the underwater hunt will be expanded to include a vast swath of ocean floor that may take at least eight months to thoroughly search, Australian officials said.

Not a single piece of confirmed debris from Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 has been recovered by a massive multinational hunt that began after it disappeared March 8 with 239 people on board.

"It is highly unlikely at this stage that we will find any aircraft debris on the ocean surface. By this stage, 52 days into the search, most material would have become waterlogged and sunk," Prime Minister Tony Abbott said.

"Therefore, we are moving from the current phase to a phase which is focused on searching the ocean floor over a much larger area," he said.

The U.S. Navy's Bluefin 21 robotic submarine has spent weeks scouring the initial search area for the plane in the remote Indian Ocean far off Australia's west coast, but has found no trace of the missing aircraft. Officials are now looking to bring in new equipment that can search a larger patch of seabed for the plane, Abbott said.

The aerial search officially ended Monday, the search coordination center confirmed.

Radar and satellite data show the jet veered far off course for unknown reasons during a flight from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to Beijing. Analyses indicate it would have run out of fuel in the remote section of ocean where the search has been focused.

The unmanned sub has been creating a three-dimensional sonar map of the ocean floor for more than two weeks near where signals consistent with airplane black boxes were heard on April 8. The sub has searched a nearly 400-square kilometer (150-square mile) area.

Crews will now begin searching the plane's entire probable impact zone, an area 700 kilometers (430 miles) long and 80 kilometers (50 miles) wide, Abbott said.

That will be a monumental task—and one that will take time, warned Angus Houston, head of the search effort.

SKorean president apologizes for ferry response

JINDO, South Korea (AP)—South Korea's president apologized Tuesday for the government's inept initial response to a deadly ferry sinking as divers fought strong currents in their search for more than 100 passengers still missing nearly two weeks after the accident.

The government also raised the death toll for what has become a point of national mourning and shame to 193. Most of the dead and missing are high school students.

Divers are largely using their hands to feel for remaining bodies as they make their way through a maze of dark cabins, stairwells, storage rooms, lounges and restaurants in the submerged ferry, which flipped upside down as it sank April 16. But they must fight strong currents swirling around the ferry and, once inside, overturned furniture, mattresses and other debris floating in the murky, sediment-heavy waters.

President Park Geun-hye's apology, and the earlier resignation of her prime minister, comes amid rising indignation over claims by the victims' relatives that the government did not do enough to rescue or protect their loved ones.

Park said at a cabinet meeting at the presidential Blue House that South Korea has "lost many precious lives because of the accident, and I am sorry to the public and am heavy-hearted." She says the government couldn't prevent the accident and "the initial response and remedy were insufficient."

Park had earlier visited a memorial set up in Ansan, the city near Seoul where the high school students are from, to pay her respects to victims. Wearing a black dress and white gloves, she laid flowers at an altar and bowed her head. According to local media, some angry family members of victims shouted at her and demanded an apology. She listened to them for 10 minutes before leaving.

Investigators, meanwhile, are expanding their probe into both the cause of the ship's sinking and the initial response by emergency workers. Officials have searched the two service centers that deal with vessel traffic and that communicated with a crew member on the ferry during the sinking, seized documents and recordings from a coast guard office in Mokpo, and have continued questioning the captain, the third mate and the helmsman who were on the bridge when the ship began listing.

Only 174 people survived the sinking, including 22 of the 29 crew members.

The government is making initial plans to eventually salvage the ferry but has indicated it won't do so until search efforts end.

World

US, EU hit Russia with new sanctions over Ukraine

WASHINGTON (AP)—The United States and its European allies hit more than two dozen Russian government officials, executives and companies with new sanctions Monday as punishment for their country's actions in Ukraine, yet the penalties stopped short of targeting Russia's broader economy and it remained unclear if they would work. In Moscow, there was relief that the sanctions were not as far-ranging as feared.

The measures, including asset freezes and visa bans, affect people close to the Kremlin, and Western leaders hope those hurt by the sanctions will pressure Russian President Vladimir Putin to limit his reach in Ukraine and de-escalate the crisis there. However, the Russian leader himself was not among those targeted, and Obama administration officials acknowledged there was no expectation that Putin would quickly change course.

Still, officials in Washington and Brussels said the sanctions, coupled with an initial set imposed following Russia's annexation of the Crimean peninsula last month, would significantly boost the cost to Moscow of ignoring an agreement it signed earlier this month to take concrete steps to ease tensions in Ukraine.

AP

In this Tuesday, May 21, 2013 file photo Thorbjoern Jagland, secretary general of the Council of Europe, left, speaks to Chairman of the Russian parliamentary committee on international affairs Alexey Pushkov during his meeting with lawmakers at the State Duma, lower parliament chamber, in Moscow, Russia.

"The goal here is not to go after Mr. Putin personally," President Barack Obama told reporters in the Philippines, where he was wrapping up a four-nation trip to Asia. "The goal is to change his calculus with respect to how the current actions that he's engaging in could have an adverse impact on the Russian economy over the long haul."

Obama said Russia still could resolve the Ukraine crisis diplomatically. But he sounded far from confident about the immediate prospects for the new sanctions packages.

"We don't yet know whether it's going to work," he said.

In addition to the sanctions on the seven individuals and 17 companies, there also are new arms and technology export restrictions on Russia.

Meanwhile, in Brussels, the European Union announced it had added 15 more officials to its Russia sanctions list, bringing to 48 the number of people singled out for "undermining Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence."

They will be banned from traveling to the 28-nation bloc, and their assets will be frozen, the EU said in a statement. The names of the individuals targeted weren't immediately released.

The EU is Russia's biggest trading partner, giving the Europeans greater economic leverage over Moscow than the U.S. has. However, the EU treads more carefully in imposing sanctions since Russia is also one of its biggest oil and gas suppliers—and the bloc apparently shied away from following Washington's lead in targeting specific Russian companies.

Among the U.S. targets is Igor Sechin, president of the Russian state oil company Rosneft, who has worked for Putin since the early 1990s. Sechin was seen as the mastermind behind the 2003 legal assault on the private oil company Yukos and its founder, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, who at the time was Russia's richest man. The most lucrative parts of Yukos were taken over by Rosneft, making it Russia's largest company. Rosneft has a major partnership deal with ExxonMobil.

Also on the list are Alexei Pushkov, the Kremlin-connected head of the international affairs committee of the Russian parliament's lower house, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Kozak, and Sergei Chemezov, another longtime Putin ally. The White House said Putin has known Chemezov, CEO of the state-owned holding company Rostec, since the 1980s, when they both lived in the same apartment building in East Germany.

Most of the 17 firms, all privately held, are controlled by three businessmen with close links to Putin: Gennady Timchenko and brothers Boris and Arkady Rotenberg, all of whom were targeted by the first round of U.S. sanctions imposed in March.

One of the companies Timchenko owns is Stroytransgaz, a construction company that has amassed millions in contracts to build oil pipelines for state-owned Transneft.

Stowaway boy's refugee mom cries for son

SHEDDER REFUGEE CAMP, Ethiopia (AP)—The Somali woman lives in a stick hut covered by ragged blankets in this dusty refugee camp. It was here that her 15-year-old son wanted to travel on a perilous journey as a stowaway on a plane from California.

Ubah Mohammed Abdule hasn't seen her boy—who was hospitalized in Hawaii after landing there last week in the wheel well of a jetliner—for eight long years.

Clutching her black-and-white head covering, she wept Sunday as she stood before the flimsy shelter holding her meager possessions and spoke about her son, Yahya Abdi.

She was alarmed, she said, by the dangerous journey the teenager undertook. Those who stow away in plane wheel wells have little chance of surviving, and many who attempt it are Africans desperate for a better life in Europe or America.

Abdi had been unhappy in California and desperately missed his mother, according to those who know his family. So on April 20, he hopped a fence at San Jose International Airport and climbed into the wheel well of a jetliner bound for Hawaii. Somehow he survived the 5 1/2-hour trip over the Pacific, despite extreme cold and low oxygen levels. He has not spoken publicly about the ordeal.

"I knew he was an intelligent boy who has strong affections for me. I also knew he always wanted to see me, but I know his father won't let them contact me at all," Abdule told an Associated Press reporter in this remote camp in eastern Ethiopia.

The boy had recently learned she was alive after being told by his father that she was dead, Abdule said. She said her ex-husband took Abdi and his two siblings to California without her knowledge and that she hadn't heard from them since 2006.

"He first took the children away from me to Sudan. Then he came back to Somalia and demanded my consent for him to take the children to the U.S. if I wanted a formal divorce. I was not OK with that and said no," Abdule said through tears. "Finally, he took all three of my children to the U.S. without my knowledge."

The boy's sister Najma Abdi said Monday that their birth mother was lying, and that the father didn't take the children away from her or mistreat them.

"I can't believe what she's doing," Najma Abdi told KPIX-TV. "She's lying, yeah, he never do that, my dad."

The boy's father Abdilahi Yusuf, said in a statement Sunday issued through a family spokesman in California that his son was "struggling adjusting to life" in America.

"Our situation was aggravated by our displacement in Africa for many years after fleeing our home country of Somalia because of war conditions. As a result, my son was not able to receive any formal education before we immigrated to the United States," the statement said.

Egypt sentences 683 to death in another mass trial

MINYA, Egypt (AP)—The Muslim Brotherhood's spiritual leader and more than 680 other people were sentenced to death Monday stemming from last year's post-coup violence in the latest mass trial that was denounced in the West and by human rights groups as contrary to the rule of law.

In a separate ruling Monday, a court banned the April 6 youth group—one of several that engineered the 2011 uprising against longtime leader Hosni Mubarak that set off nearly three years of unrest. It ordered the confiscation of the group's offices.

The sentences for the 683 defendants were announced by Judge Said Youssef at a court session in the southern city of Minya that lasted only eight minutes.

The verdicts are not final and are expected to be overturned. Under the law, once the defendants who were tried in absentia turn themselves in—which is all but 63 of the accused—their trials will start over.

The mass trials were linked to riots in which supporters of ousted President Mohammed Morsi allegedly attacked police stations and churches in retaliation for security forces violently breaking up Cairo sit-ins by Islamists in August that left hundreds dead. The defendants in Monday's trial are part of a group of nearly 1,000 who were implicated in the deaths of three policemen and a civilian, as well as others who were injured.

Youssef said he was referring the death sentences—which followed convictions for the violence—to the Grand Mufti, Egypt's top Islamic official. The move is a legal requirement that is usually considered a formality, but it also allows the judge to change his mind.

Youssef also reduced the sentences against 529 defendants from a mass trial at which he presided in March. He upheld the death penalty for only 37 of them—an extraordinarily high number under Egyptian law—and commuted the rest to life imprisonment. The death sentences are being appealed by the prosecutor general.

By contrast, after the trial in the wake of the 1981 assassination of President Anwar Sadat, only five people were executed.

Monday's court action drew international outcry.

Amnesty International said it feared the judiciary is "becoming just another part of the authorities' repressive machinery, issuing sentences of death and life imprisonment on an industrial scale."

Washington called for the rulings to be reversed.

"The United States is deeply concerned by today's Egyptian court actions related to another mass trial and preliminary death sentences as well as the banning of the April 6 youth movement activities," said State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki.

"These court decisions run counter to the most basic democratic principles and foster the instability, extremism, and radicalization that Egypt's interim government says it seeks to resolve," she said.

German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said the verdicts "make a mockery of the rule of law."

WORLD BRIEFS

Violence kills nearly 50 in Iraq ahead of key vote

BAGHDAD (AP)—Militants on Monday targeted polling stations across much of Iraq and a crowd of Kurds jubilantly dancing on the street as soldiers and security forces cast ballots two days ahead of parliamentary elections, officials said. The attacks, including a suicide bombing northeast of Baghdad, left at least 46 people dead. The wave of attacks was an apparent attempt to derail the balloting process and discourage the rest of the country's 22 million registered voters from going to the polls on Wednesday in the first nationwide elections since the 2011 withdrawal of U.S. forces. The early balloting for police and soldiers is meant to free up the 1 million-strong military and security forces so they can protect polling stations and voters on election day. More than 9,000 candidates are vying for 328 seats in parliament, which is widely expected to be won by an alliance led by Shiite Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, who is likely to seek a third four-year term in office.

Kerry backs off Israel 'apartheid' comment

WASHINGTON (AP)—Secretary of State John Kerry said Monday he had chosen the wrong word in describing Israel's potential future after coming under withering criticism for saying the Jewish state could become an "apartheid state" if it doesn't reach a peace deal with the Palestinians. In a statement released by the State Department, Kerry lashed out against "partisan political" attacks against him, but acknowledged his comments last week to a closed international forum could have been misinterpreted. While he pointedly did not apologize for the remarks, he stressed he was, and is, a strong supporter of Israel, which he called a "vibrant democracy." He said his remarks were only an expression of his firm belief that a two-state resolution is the only viable way to end the long-running conflict. And, he stressed, he does not believe Israel is, or is definitely track to become, an "apartheid state."

Focus

By LAURAN NEERGAARD
AP MEDICAL WRITER

Unique floating lab showcases 'aliens of the sea'

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)—Researcher Leonid Moroz emerges from a dive off the Florida Keys and gleefully displays a plastic bag holding a creature that shimmers like an opal in the seawater.

This translucent animal and its similarly strange cousins are food for science. They regrow with amazing speed if they get chopped up. Some even regenerate a rudimentary brain.

"Meet the aliens of the sea," the neurobiologist at the University of Florida says with a huge grin.

They're headed for his unique floating laboratory.

Moroz is on a quest to decode the genomic blueprints of fragile marine life, like these mysterious comb jellies, in real time—on board the ship where they were caught—so he can learn which genes switch on and off as the animals perform such tasks as regeneration.

No white coats needed here. The lab is a specially retrofitted steel shipping container, able to be lifted by crane onto any ship Moroz can recruit for a scientific adventure.

Inside, researchers in flip-flops operate a state-of-the-art genomic sequencing machine secured to a tilting tabletop that bobs with rough waves. Genetic data is beamed via satellite to a supercomputer at the University of Florida, which analyzes the results in a few hours and sends it back to the boat.

The work is part conservation.

"Life came from the oceans," Moroz says, bemoaning the extinction of species before scientists even catalog all of them. "We need a Manhattan Project for biodiversity. We're losing our heritage."

Surprising as it may sound, it's part brain science.

"We cannot regenerate our brain, our spinal cord or efficiently heal wounds without scars," Moroz notes.

But some simple sea creatures can.

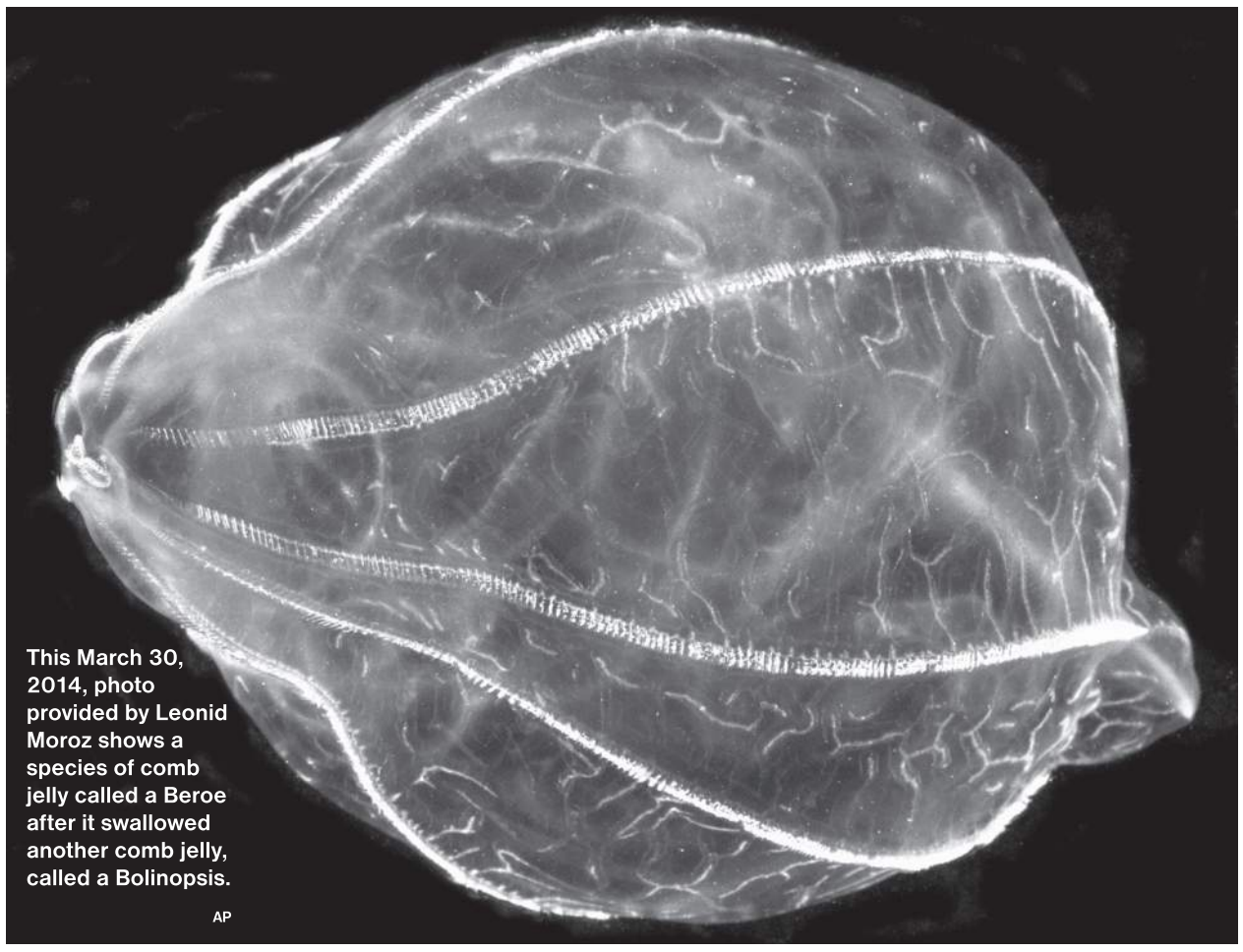
Moroz accidentally cuts off part of a comb jelly's flowing lower lobe while putting it into a tank. A few hours later, the wound no longer is visible. By the next afternoon, that lobe had begun to regrow.

What's more remarkable, these gelatinous animals have neurons, or nerve cells, connected in circuitry that Moroz describes as an elementary brain. Injure those neural networks and some, but not all, species of comb jellies can regenerate them, too, in three days to five days, he says, if they're in a habitat where they can survive long enough.

"Nature has found solutions to how to stay healthy," says Moroz, who also studies human brains when he's back on shore. "We need to learn how they do it. But they are so fragile, we have to do it here," at sea.

Two trial-run sails off the Florida coast showed that the shipboard lab can work. Moroz's team generated information about thousands of genes in 22 organisms, including some rare comb jellies. Moroz's ultimate goal is to take the project around the world, to remote seas where it's especially hard to preserve marine animals for study.

"If the sea can't come to the lab, the lab must come to the sea," says Moroz, who invited The Associated Press on the second test trip, a 2 1/2-day sail.



This March 30, 2014, photo provided by Leonid Moroz shows a species of comb jelly called a Beroe after it swallowed another comb jelly, called a Bolinopsis.

AP

Flying fish zip alongside the 141-foot yacht Copasetic as it bounces across the giant ocean current known as the Gulf Stream. Inside the lab, a $50,000 genetic sequencer donated by Life Technologies is rocking on its special tabletop.

Molecular biologist Andrea Kohn wedges her hip against cabinets to stay upright, prepping the machine for the day's first run.

With a pipette in hand, she carefully drips precious samples from a comb jelly experiment onto a chip the size of a digital camera's memory card.

Graduate student Rachel Sanford had given a series of these animals a cut, and then biopsied the healing tissue 30 minutes, an hour and two hours later. She's trying to tease out what genetic activity spurs the steps of healing.

She studies the comb jellies' rudimentary brains in much the same way.

"I work on these things that are kind of like jellyfish, but they're not jellyfish at all. And I take out their brain. And then it grows back. And then I try to figure out how it grows back," is Sanford's simplified explanation.

She's looking for master regulators, key molecules that control that regrowth. If she can find some, a logical next step would be to investigate whether people harbor anything similar that might point to pathways important in spinal cord or brain injuries.

A clue, Moroz says, probably will be found in the differences between comb jelly species. "Why does one regenerate, and another not? That is the million-dollar question."

Evolution shows "there is more than one design for how to make a cell, how to make a brain," he adds.

The floating lab was born of frustration, Kohn says as she keeps close watch on the sequencing.

While there's been an earlier attempt at less complex DNA fingerprinting at sea, traditionally marine scientists collect animals, freeze samples and ship them home for genetic research.

But often, Moroz had shipments lost in transit or held up at U.S. Customs, thawed and ruined. Plus, some creatures' genetic material begins breaking down almost immediately after they're caught.

"When I think of all the animals we've lost through years and years," Kohn says, shaking her head. To completely map the genome of a single comb jelly species, "it took us a year to get DNA that wasn't degraded."

Researchers usually collect extra animals as insurance. But the supercomputer's rapid feedback means with Moroz's new project, "there's a lot more preservation," says University of Washington biology professor Billie Swalla, who is watching it with interest. "If you have unused animals, you can return them."

The pieces for the floating lab fell into place last fall after The International SeaKeepers Society introduced Moroz to University of Florida alumnus Steven Sablotsky, who was willing to lend his boat for the trial runs. Then, the Copasetic's captain noted that the main deck could fit a shipping container like freighters use to transport goods.

The nonprofit Florida Biodiversity Institute found one for sale, welded in windows and installed lab fixtures, and the team was off.

If oceanography and brains seem strange bedfellows, consider: Much of what scientists know about how human neurons and synapses, their connections, form memories came from years of studies using large sea slugs, called Aplysia, such as the one graduate student Emily Dabe gently cups in her hand.

Human brains have 86 billion neurons, give or take. Sea slugs have only about 10,000 neurons, large ones grouped into clusters rather than a central brain, Dabe explains while dissecting the easy-to-spot cells. She brought the animal on board as a control for experiments with the more mysterious creatures.

Yet scientists can condition sea slugs, with mild shocks to their gills, to study that type of memory, Dabe says. Her own research examines the neurochemical serotonin in the animals.

A bit further up the neural ladder, the octopus, with the most complex nervous systems of any animal without a backbone, has about 500 million neurons, says graduate student Gabrielle Winters. There are reports of them learning by watching, although Moroz cautions that's highly controversial.

Understanding how multiple genes work together to make increasingly complex memories is a building block toward better understanding of brain diseases. It requires working with simple creatures, notes the University of Washington's Swalla, an invertebrate specialist.

"We sequenced the human genome but we still don't know how it works," she explains. "To figure out how it works, you have to have other models you can work on. A lot of these genes are the same, and they interact in the same kind of pathways."

Moroz compares the genetic interactions to learning grammar: knowing an animal's, or a person's, DNA is like knowing the alphabet and some words, but not how they're strung together to make a sentence.

"We need to know how to orchestrate the grammar of the brain," said Moroz, whose research is funded by NASA, the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation and others.

Outside on the deck, it's suddenly like Christmas.

Moroz and Gustav Paulay, a curator at the Florida Museum of Natural History, are back from a bluewater dive bearing gifts for the lab: clear jars and plastic bags teeming with invertebrates that Paulay describes as "wonky."

The race is on to keep them alive for study. Moroz's three graduate students hoist buckets of seawater and transfer the delicate animals into tanks, stopping to ogle strange finds.

"Oh my god, you have to see this one," Paulay exclaims, entranced by a rarely seen type of flat, see-through snail, pink ribbons snaking through its shell-free body.

Another transparent mollusk has wings.

Then there's the wriggly worm that looks like a Chinese dragon, big eyes glowing red under the microscope. Unlike with most worms, these eyes actually form images, Paulay instructs as the ship's crew and passengers crowd around to watch.

Invertebrates are critical to the food chain, but little is known about them. It's estimated that thousands of species have yet to be identified. Paulay calls them "nature's master works," but says they're just not as sexy to study as, say, pandas or tigers.

In the oceans, "the amount of new stuff out there is boggling. It's changing before our eyes," he says.

But the catch of this day is the collection of comb jellies, officially named ctenophores. (Don't pronounce the silent "c".) They made headlines last year as DNA research suggested these animals may represent the oldest branch of the animal family tree, rather than the sea sponges that scientists long have believed held that distinction.

Named for the comb-like rows of hair they use to swim, the ctenophores refract light so it looks like they flash electric through the water. The one that shimmered like an opal is a little bigger than a golf ball.

Another is light pink, flat and shaped like a delicate sack. This one's a hungry predator: It swallows whole its larger, rounded cousin when the researchers turn their backs.

A tiny, hot pink version zips through the water—it looks like a new species, Moroz says.

Some ctenophores regenerate that elementary brain and some, like that hungry sack-shaped Beroe, don't. Some use more muscles to swim. Some have tentacles to catch their food, instead of the Beroe's stretchy mouth.

Moroz muses on the diversity: "Tell me honestly, why do we study rats?"

Campus Life

Report: 4 in 5 US high school students graduate

By KIMBERLY HEFLING
AP EDUCATION WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—U.S. public high schools have reached a milestone, an 80 percent graduation rate. Yet that still means 1 of every 5 students walks away without a diploma.

Citing the progress, researchers are projecting a 90 percent national graduation rate by 2020.

Their report, based on Education Department statistics from 2012, was being presented Monday at the Building a GradNation Summit.

The growth has been spurred by such factors as a greater awareness of the dropout problem and efforts by districts, states and the federal government to include graduation rates in accountability measures. Among the initiatives are closing "dropout factory" schools.

In addition, schools are taking aggressive action, such as hiring intervention specialists who work with students one on one, to keep teenagers in class, researchers said.

Growth in rates among African-American and Hispanic students helped fuel the gains. Most of the growth has occurred since 2006 after decades of stagnation.

"At a moment when everything seems so broken and seems so unfixable ... this story tells you something completely different," said John Gomperts, president of America's Promise Alliance, which was founded by former Secretary of State Colin Powell and helped produce the report.

The rate of 80 percent is based on federal statistics primarily using a calculation by which the number of graduates in a given is year divided by the number of students who enrolled four years earlier. Adjustments are made for transfer students.

In 2008, the Bush administration ordered all states to begin using this method. States previously used a wide variety of ways to calculate high school graduation rates.

Iowa, Vermont, Wisconsin, Nebraska and Texas ranked at the top with rates at 88 percent or 89 percent. The bottom performers were Alaska, Georgia, New Mexico, Oregon and Nevada, which had rates at 70 percent or below.

Idaho, Kentucky and Oklahoma were not included because these states received federal permission to take longer to roll out their system.

The new calculation method allows researchers to individually follow students and chart progress based on their income level. By doing so, researchers found that some states are doing much better than others in getting low-income students—or those who receive free or reduced lunch meals—to graduation day.

Tennessee, Texas, Arkansas and Kansas, for example, have more than half of all students counted as low income but overall graduation rates that are above average. In contrast, Minnesota, Wyoming and Alaska have a lower percentage of low-income students but a lower than average overall graduation rate.

Graduation rates increased 15 percentage points for Hispanic students and 9 percentage points for African American students from 2006 to 2012, with the Hispanic students graduating at 76 percent and African-American students at 68 percent, the report said. To track historic trends, the graduation rates were calculated using a different method.

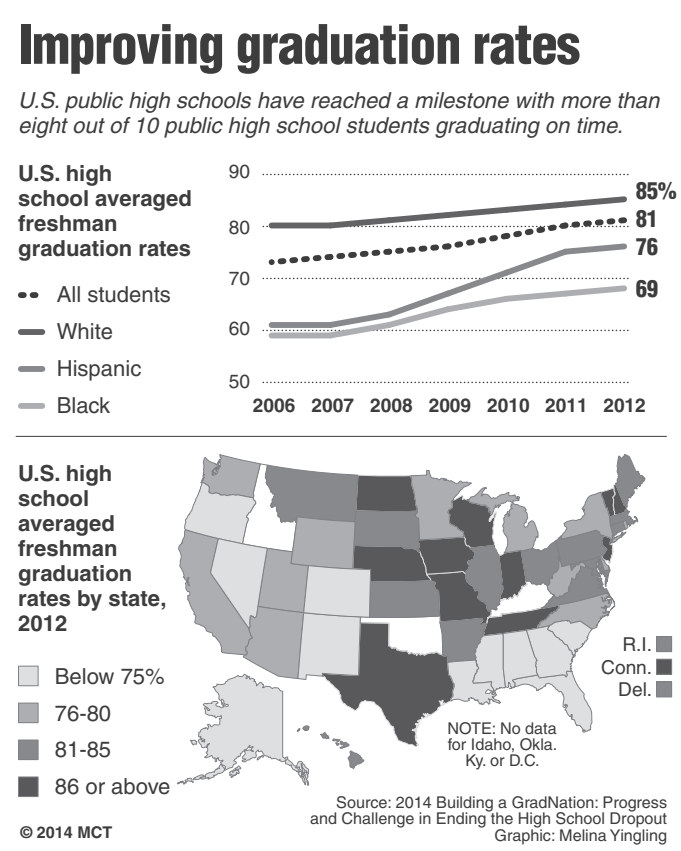
Also, there were 32 percent fewer "dropout factories"—schools that graduate less than 60 percent of students—than a decade earlier, according to the report. In 2012, nearly one-quarter of African-American students attended a dropout factory, compared with 46 percent in 2002. About 15 percent of Hispanic students attended one of these schools, compared with 39 percent a decade earlier. There were an estimated 1,359 of these schools in 2012.

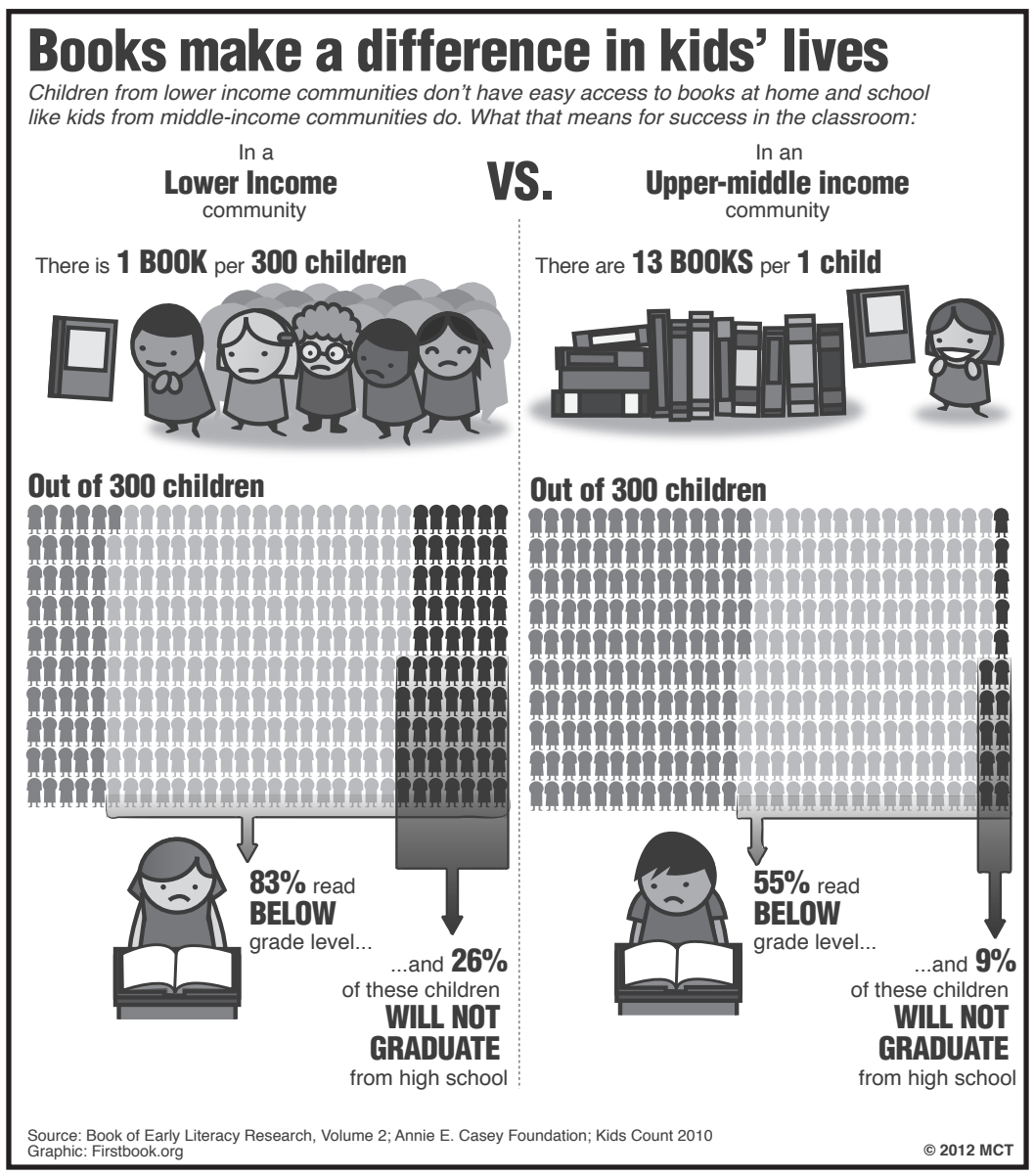
Robert Balfanz, a researcher with the Everyone Graduates Center at the School of Education at Johns Hopkins University who was a report author, said some of these schools got better. Other districts closed these schools or converted them to smaller schools or parents and kids voted with their feet and transferred elsewhere.

If the graduation rate stayed where it was in 2001, 1.7 million additional students would not have received a diploma during the period, Balfanz said.

"It's actually a story of remarkable social improvement, that you could actually identify a problem, understand its importance, figure out what works and apply it and make a difference," Balfanz said.

In New Hampshire, where the graduation rate is 86 percent, Anne Grassie, a state representative and former longtime member of the Rochester School Board, cites a change in state law in 2007 that raised the dropout age to 18. In Rochester, she said there have been numerous initiatives such as programs that allow students who fail classes to begin making them up online or after school instead of waiting for summer school and an alternative school for at-risk students.




Books make a difference in kids' lives
Children from lower income communities don't have easy access to books at home and school like kids from middle-income communities do. What that means for success in the classroom:
In a Lower Income community
VS.
In an Upper-middle income community
There is 1 BOOK per 300 children
There are 13 BOOKS per 1 child
Out of 300 children
83% read BELOW grade level...
...and 26% of these children WILL NOT GRADUATE from high school
Out of 300 children
55% read BELOW grade level...
...and 9% of these children WILL NOT GRADUATE from high school
Source: Book of Early Literacy Research, Volume 2; Annie E. Casey Foundation; Kids Count 2010
Graphic: Firstbook.org
© 2012 MCT

Survey: Americans unfamiliar with the Common Core

By ADRIENNE LU
STATELINE.ORG

WASHINGTON—A majority of Americans have never heard of the Common Core State Standards and dissatisfaction with standardized testing in schools is growing, according to a survey released Wednesday.

The Common Core, which was voluntarily adopted by all but a handful of states, consists of English and math standards establishing what children should learn each year from kindergarten through 12th grade. The standards were intended to ensure students graduate from high school prepared to enter college or begin careers, as well as to provide some uniformity in education among the states.

Among the findings of the survey by Phi Delta Kappa International and Gallup:

■ 62 percent of those surveyed had never heard of the standards. Even among those with children in public schools, only 45 percent had heard of the Common Core.

■ Only 22 percent said testing helped the performance of their local school, down from 28 percent in 2007. Another 36 percent went further, saying that testing was hurting school performance.

■ Americans are also growing wary of using students' standardized tests to evaluate teachers. In just one year, the percentage of respondents who oppose using tests for teacher evaluations grew from 47 percent to 58 percent.

Even those who said they had heard of the Common Core had false impressions of the standards. Some agreed that the Common Core will create standards in all academic areas, is based on a blend of state standards or is a mandate of the federal government—all of which are false.

William J. Bushaw, executive director of PDK International, a professional association for educators based in Arlington, Va., said he was surprised how many Americans have not heard of the Common Core.

"State and local education leaders have been very focused on implementing the standards and working on the new assessments," Bushaw said. "It really wasn't until less than a year ago that groups suddenly raised criticism against the standards. It's my opinion that the state and local leaders were caught off guard by that."

The Common Core has critics on both the left and right. Conservative critics say it is an intrusion from the federal government. (The standards were adopted by the states, but the Obama administration has strongly supported the effort.) Some critics on the left have expressed concerns about the testing associated with the standards, arguing that the tests are too difficult or that teachers should not be evaluated based on student testing.

Bushaw said he expects education leaders will devote more effort to informing the public about the Common Core so that they will be more supportive of it.

Sandra Boyd is chief operating officer and senior vice president of strategic initiatives for Achieve, a nonprofit education reform organization based in Washington, D.C., that helped to create the Common Core, along with the National Governors Association and Council of Chief State School Officers.

Boyd said that while some individual teachers, schools and districts have done a good job educating parents and the public about the Common Core and its implications, the survey indicates a need for more communication.

"The takeaway for everyone is that it's really important for parents and for the general public to understand what the expectations in schools are, what kids should be able to do at the end of every grade," Boyd said. "It's incumbent upon everyone that that's the case."

Other surveys have also found that the public is not very familiar with the Common Core.

A recent poll by The Associated Press and NORC at the University of Chicago found that 26 percent of parents think their children take too many tests. Fifty-two percent of parents surveyed said they have heard little or nothing about the Common Core.

Parents surveyed in the AP poll appeared to support standardized testing more strongly than those surveyed by PDK International, with 75 percent saying standardized tests are a good measure of children's abilities and 69 percent agreeing that such tests are a good measure of a school's quality.

Life & Style

A monthlong celebration of poetry

April is National Poetry Month, a monthlong, national celebration of poetry established by the Academy of American Poets as a way to increase awareness and appreciation of poetry in the United States. To mark the occasion, Tinian English teacher Joseph B. Connolly submitted the following poems for publication:

Final Four Spring Break Sonnets

By JOSEPH B. CONNOLLY
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Readers, here are the final four sonnets I wrote during Spring Break and National Poetry Month 2014.
Sonnet No. 1 WAS written eight miles high over the Pacific; sonnet No. 2 coming into Hong Kong; sonnet No. 3 between HK and Guam; sonnet No. 4 flying up from Guam over Naftan Rock, Aguigan, and Tinian to Saipan. A bit of doggerel to introduce them:

FINAL FOUR SPRING BREAK SONNETS
Airy fairy, they're all air balls indeed
Nothing but net and half court hooks
Flying at five hundred MPH the speed
In the basketball of my brain it cooks
Eight miles high, space, love, and home
In uncomfortable seats I write each poem

#1. UNIVERSE? MULTIVERSE?
I AM ALL YOURS
I am all yours but lost somewhere
Lost in the atmosphere above Juarez
On a cosmic road rising desert air
Lost in a dream like the old song says
You can't find me and I can't find you
Our spirits soar stellar super nova bright
Dark stormy weather hides a sky of blue
Black holes not any easier to find at night
Oh wake me up way before the dawn
The planet Venus shines far off in the East
Cold and shivering I start to yawn
Your smile a fresh memory at least
Our love is both a blessing and a curse
Lost in the multiverse it could be worse

#2. BOOMERS BETWEEN
the IMMENSITIES
Long time the greenbacks daily we all sought
Barely taking time for a vacation
Overcome by rust grudgingly we bought
Cars or trucks to fix the situation
Apartment to house we moved as we grew
We, then our kids got an education
Learning about drugs and booze we turned blue
Taking advantage of situations
Life was full of surprises and new plans
Discussing problems and propensities
Mortgages, bankrupt, still major league fans
Stumbling along between the IMMENSITIES
Yes, BIRTH and DEATH, some tales not yet spoken
Still blooming, mature flowers, not broken

#3. LOVE AS A MONTHLY TYPHOON
Love doth reign and live in each monthly moon
Builds itself up and down for twenty eight days
Waxes on with growing light, wanes too soon
Comes and goes, man, woman, rabbit, many ways

Clouds gather one fine morn, build towards evening
Even Cupid seeks prognostication
Cyclonic choruses begin to sing
Crescendo to a heartfelt location

Love leaps over latitudes of attitudes
But "Here comes your nineteenth nervous breakdown"
In the eye of the storm pleasant platitudes
Feeder bands drop salty tears of a clown

Yet this temporary typhoon doth move
Sweet cyclic winds to meet and greet our love

#4. HOME ON TINIAN
Happy the man and woman who have gone
Traveling far throughout Micronesia
Meeting people, watching sunset and dawn
Where everyday seems to reach out and please ya

Ai adai, When will I return and how
long will it be before I finally reach
Unai Dankolo, Kammer, and Taga Beach
Or walk down a road, a chalan kaskao?

Oh how I miss my home in palm tree shade
No city high rises - concrete and steel made
Can compare with the clean waters where I wade
More than New York state I love Tinian
The sea's salty breeze and cooling trade winds
The place, its people, my students and friends

Fun With Food

FROM A CHICKEN SHACK
TO A POULTRY PALACE
when I eat wings my brother
such wings so fine to dine
such meat my mind remembers
in fricaseed and fried Septembers
just when a late lunch seems over
General Tso's chicken pours down my gullet
when I eat those wings my brother
such wings from any poultry pullet

such meat as turkey, pheasant, and chickens
when their roasting aroma hits my nose
and fills my appetites sensation
with cholesterol free elation
then my heart stops and sickens
with fear the store may close
where I buy those delicious chickens
some roasted, some fried, some froze

we sons and daughters of carnivores
who enjoy eating animal legs and wings
what animal that walks we'll eat it
with grass, hay, and corn we'll feed it
"free birds fly higher than freemen"
wander wild the moose, deer, and boars
we sons and daughters of carnivores
still enjoy eating animal legs and wings

with Buffalo wings and special sauce
dinner bells ring for every girl and boy
turkey thighs hot right out of the oven
candied yams and giblet gravy to shove in
a fresh spinach salad to garnish and toss
pies of custard and pumpkin bring joy
with Buffalo wings and special sauce
dinner bells ring for every girl and boy

THE ELVISH PRETZEL
the Elvish Pretzel had dough that was squiggly
an oaf of a loaf of lounge lizard proportions
twas baked in the image of Pelvish Wriggly
you had to love its tender distortions

and once reaching the perfect temperature
it got up from its baking pan and strolled
past light crust doughboys who for sure
liked those sticky buns being sold

beyond carrot cakes and banana crean pies
through the marble halls of Memphis malls
near jelly donuts and candy bars to despise
small spas selling mini fountains of Niagara Falls

where shops full of Titanic ties and Gordian knots
bind us all to the myth of the Sisyphean orb
for fun in the sun during cold spells and hots
with as many hot dogs and buns as we can absorb

it tried garlic mayonnaise and maple marinade
with TV's Emeril and Martha twisting on the spit
sipping flavonoid flavored lemonade
at a shish kebab marathon in a BBQ pit

popping corn and chewing Chinese sesame seed
talking cold turkey burgers, telling fat turkey tales
French's mustard said we just may need
'Bright' ideas if proof in the plum pudding fails

beyond parade ground picnic or tailgates
tonight
the French fried onion rings all scream
for ketchup, catsup, and malt vinegar light
dessert is almond biscotti with spumoni ice cream

it moved on to the chops - lamb, pork, and karate
skipping all those salads so green
about Atkins diet its belief was shoddy
so it went for gaseous portions of baked bean

sweet Walla Walla onions and mung bean sprouts
were overflowing a blue corn taco so dear
about the salsa there were some doubts
so it was washed down with a lime and beer

yellow squash blossom tempura fritters
gobs of goat and sheep cheese galore
anchovy pasta for the critters and quitters
it chewed that squid till its gums were sore

creamy cheese dollops of pimento macaroni
hot chicken mole' in a cast iron pan
burping up the funky old cold baloney
was the buiscuit and red eyed gravy man

the Elvish Pretzel is now long gone
keeping those double fudge brownies at bay
and putting on pounds on the summer lawn
during this amazing grace land holiday

SCRUMPTIOUS SONNETS

A HOTDOG RETURNS
They sold me, right after I cooked, because my smell
To them seemed piquant and delicious in the air
That aroma slowly wafting everywhere
With its warm succulent fragrance casting a spell
All around until no nose would have a nostril
That had not had its nasal passages stirred.
Then its neural receptors in the grey matter
Sent everyone a most mouth watering message
From me. Pile those hot dogs high on a platter.
But this boiled world is not my only visage.
Indeed one might say, This Frankfurter sometimes frys,
I should acknowledge my Viennese heritage
And love of Italian-Polish sausage allies
Perhaps, once, with sweet relish, I dreamed of mustard.

THE KERNELS
Kernels! Kernels! Frying hot
In the bottom of the pot,
What helping hand or eye would stop
You and others from starting to pop?

What distant field or garden meadow
Grew the cobs on which you grow?
On what stalk in late July
Which plant plucked? Which ripe to try?

And what popper and which pan
Brings pops and kicks like Jackie Chan?
And what extremes of heat explode
A bag of popcorn ala mode?

Kernels, kernels keep on popping open
We love to taste your insides when broken

WHEN RIPE WATERMELON
When ripe watermelon bursts its rind
And juicy red flesh can be seen
All the fruits of summer come to mind
And watermelon is the Queen
The crowning glory of any picnic
Just what every barbecue needs
Thump for ripeness to get the right pick
Have fun, spitting out all the seeds

MY FAVE BURGER RAVE
When you plant your feet on the fast food floor
You'll find fat food from door to door
If morbid obesity you despise
Stay away from burgers and fries
To not get fat just put on the brakes
Stay away from pies and shakes
As with drugs you can just say no
Start walking fast and the weight will go

CUSTARD INSIDE BOSTON CREAM PIES
Custard inside Boston cream pies
A target for blue bottleneck flies
Dead wasps inside the pastry shell
Don't change the sweet delicious smell
Took a bite from a chocolate eclair
And found a two inch cockroach inside there
Though my delight in pastry did dissipate
All that pie and ice cream kept on the weight

THE PIZZA AND THE RAPPER
*after Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's The Arrow & the Song

I threw some dough into the air
It fell back down onto my hair
Trying to look like pizza pros
Got yeasty gobs on all my clothes
Rapping freestyle with an old friend
I didn't quite know when to end
My mouth did run , my lips did flap
Rant and rhyme, ridiculous rap
With more practice and sleight of hand
Pizza dough landed in the pan
And the rap at last found an end
Straight out the mouth of my old friend

EPISTLE TO DEEP FRIED DOUGHNUTS
Why do I cook? What dish to me unknown
Fried in a pan with a batter homegrown?
As yet an uncooked spicy recipe,
I add chopped nuts, put on a pot of tea.
I leave no room for error in fried cakes,
No eggs unbroken, no cooking mistakes.
The cruller served and dunked in a coffee cup,
Rolled in powdered sugar, eaten right up...

EPIGRAM FOR PIZZA
"Who ate the pepperoni pizza?"
"I" said Joey Connolly,
" the whole thing by me only
now I smile like Mona Lisa."

Clooney gives up serial romance for engagement

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Looks like George Clooney owes Michelle Pfeiffer a lot of money.

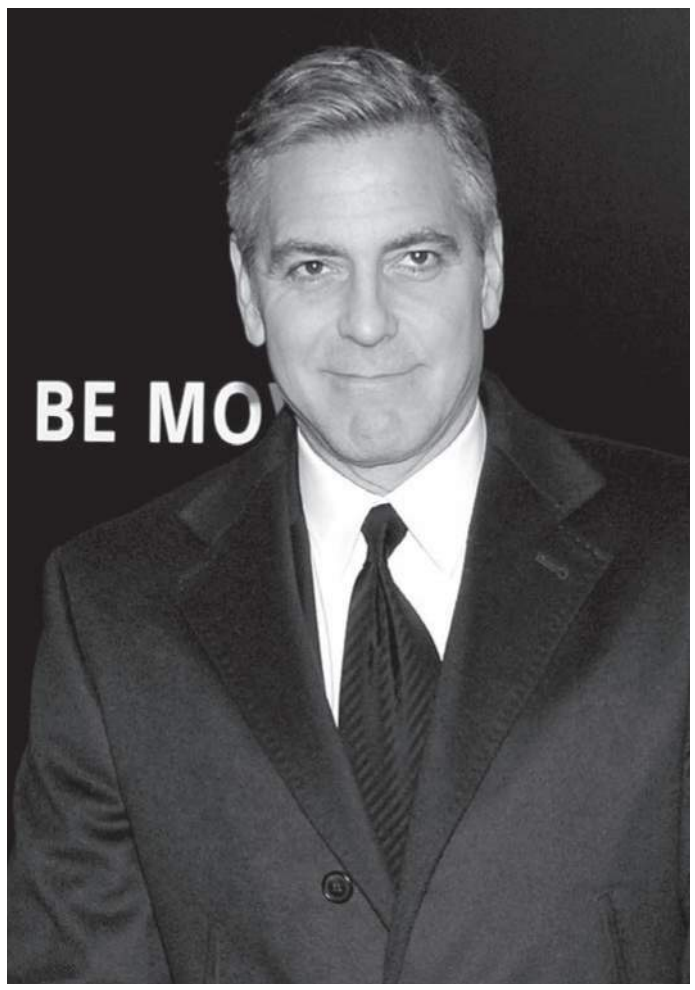
The 52-year-old actor—Hollywood's most determined bachelor, famous for a litany of fleeting loves—has taken himself off the romantic market, even though he once bet Pfeiffer $100,000 that he'd never marry again.

After dating a string of actresses, models, a cocktail waitress and a former professional wrestler, Clooney recently proposed to 36-year-old international law attorney Amal Alamuddin—despite repeated protestations that marriage wasn't for him.

"This fascination with my love life is really something," he told the British newspaper The Express earlier this year. "I keep saying I'll never get married again or have children, but people just don't want to believe me."

News of the engagement was announced by the human-rights law firm where Alamuddin works. Doughty Street Chambers said Monday its lawyers and staff "offer their best wishes and congratulations to Ms. Amal Alamuddin...and Mr. George Clooney on their engagement to be married."

Alamuddin has advised former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan on Syria, helped ex-Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko challenge her imprisonment and represented WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange as he fought extradition to Sweden.



AP

In this Feb. 4, 2014 file, director and actor George Clooney attends the premiere of "The Monuments Men" at the Ziegfeld Theatre in New York.

AP

This Feb. 7, 2011 file photo shows human rights attorney Amal Alamuddin, in London.

Though they may seem like opposites, the pair, who were first photographed together late last year, have more in common than some might think.

Clooney has shown increasing interest in international affairs and human-rights issues, campaigning for a resolution to the conflict in Darfur and organizing a starry telethon to help Haiti after the 2010 earthquake. He's also hosted fundraisers for President Obama, and recently made headlines for defending the president during an argument with Las Vegas casino mogul Steve Wynn.

So what about Alamuddin made Clooney decide to give up the single life? Specific details are unclear. But she certainly cuts a different swath from his previous public romances. Here's a partial list of loves Clooney left behind:

■ Talia Balsam, married from 1989 to 1993: The 55-year-old actress is now married to actor-director John Slattery of "Mad Men" fame.

■ Kimberly Russell, dated in the mid-1990s: The 49-year-old actress has been married to Michael Bonewitz, who works in film production, since 2000.

■ Krista Allen, dated in the early 2000s: Best known for roles on "Baywatch" and "Days of Our Lives," the 43-year-old Allen met Clooney while making 2002's "Confessions of a Dangerous Mind" and dated him on and off for several years.

■ Lucy Liu, dated in the early 2000s: The 45-year-old "Elementary" star was linked to Clooney in 2000 and photographed kissing him in 2006.

■ Lisa Snowdon, dated in the early 2000s: A British TV personality and fashion model, the 41-year-old Snowdon made headlines for her five-year, on-and-off relationship with Clooney on both sides of the Atlantic.

■ Sarah Larson, dated in 2008: Larson, 34, was a Las Vegas cocktail waitress when Clooney romanced her for nearly a year.

■ Elisabetta Canalis, dated 2009 to 2011: The 35-year-old Italian TV personality went onto become a "Dancing With the Stars" contestant in the United States after she and Clooney ended their two-year romance.

■ Stacy Keibler, dated from 2011 to 2013: A former professional wrestler, Keibler, 34, was Clooney's companion at countless Hollywood events during their two-year relationship. She is now married to entrepreneur Jared Pobre and expecting her first child.

Billy Joel tells Howard Stern about trying heroin

NEW YORK (AP)—Billy Joel, in a wide-ranging interview at an event that included performances of his hits by Tony Bennett and Melissa Etheridge, dished on his past, including trying heroin and almost forming a supergroup with Sting.

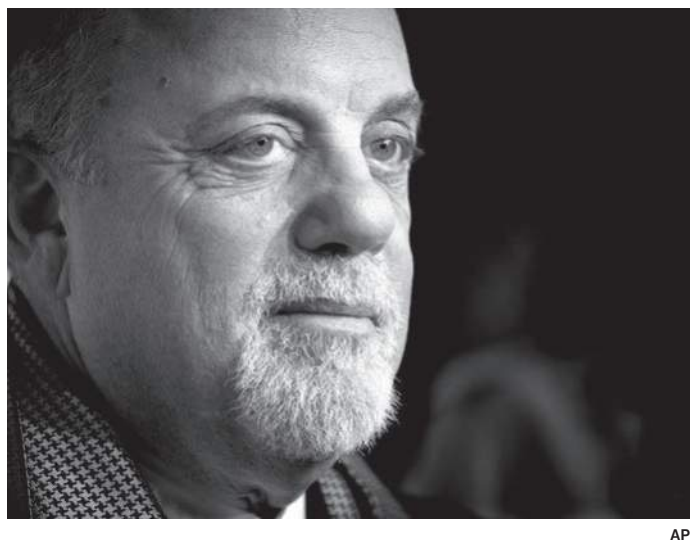
The piano man opened up Monday in a two-hour interview with Howard Stern in front of 150 people in New York, where he also discussed his career, family, childhood and current month-to-month run at Madison Square Garden.

Joel, who's 64, said he tried heroin once but it "scared" him. He said it was the inspiration behind the song "Scandinavian Skies" from his 1982 album "The Nylon Curtain."

He also said he talked about forming a group with Sting, Don Henley and "another guitarist."

"I liked being in a band," he told the audience. "Someday we might put together a silly supergroup."

Bennett closed the three-hour event, which aired live on Stern's SiriusXM radio show, with a rousing rendition of "New York State of Mind" that earned him roaring cheers at the Cutting Room as Joel watched on. Etheridge was a firecracker when she played guitar and sang "Only the Good Die Young," which she said she listened to religiously in high school.



AP

This Oct. 15, 2013 file photo shows Billy Joel at the Elton John AIDS Foundation's 12th Annual "An Enduring Vision" benefit gala at Cipriani Wall Street in New York.

Joel said he doesn't have plans to release new music but said he recently recorded a Christmas song with Johnny Mathis, who's 78.

"He sounds great!" Joel said.

Joel answered questions from Stern, his sidekick Robin Quivers and fans, including TV personalities Rachael Ray and Matt Lauer, who asked about Joel's daughter, singer Alexa Ray Joel.

"She's really good," Joel said. "Everyone thinks dad set it up ... she did it on her own."

The interview ranged from Joel talking about attending the Woodstock festival in 1969, only to last a day and a half and miss Jimi Hendrix, to growing up Jewish on Long Island though he attended Catholic church and was baptized.

Joel sang and played piano between conversations and mimicked other artists including Johnny Cash to Elton John. He performed a duet version of "She's Always a Woman" with Pink, who walked down the aisle to the song when she got married in 2006.

"You changed my life. ... You were like a god that I prayed to. ... I am, too, a Jew who got baptized," Pink said to laughs.

"I got to see my dad get happy when your songs came on," added Pink, whose father and teary-eyed mother sat in the audience.

Joel also played piano as Tony Award-winning artist Idina Menzel sang "Honesty," and he was in awe when Boyz II Men performed "The Longest Time."

Joel is performing a monthly residency at Madison Square Garden. His next show is May 9, his 65th birthday.

Craig Ferguson announces late-night retirement

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A few weeks after David Letterman announced he'd be retiring from the CBS late-night television lineup, Craig Ferguson did the same.

Ferguson, host of "The Late Late Show" since 2005, told his studio audience during Monday's taping that he will step down at the end of the year. Ferguson's show airs after Letterman's, at 12:35 a.m. on weekdays.

The move was no surprise after CBS announced that Stephen Colbert will replace Letterman next year. There was a time that Ferguson, whose show won a Peabody Award in 2009, was considered a strong contender for that job.

But "The Late Late Show" has faded in the ratings, particularly with the arrival of Seth Meyers in February as competition in the same time slot.

"CBS and I are not getting divorced, we are consciously uncoupling," Ferguson said. "But we will still spend holidays together and share custody of the fake horse and robot skeleton, both of whom we love very much."

He told the audience it was his decision to leave, adding, "CBS has been fine with me."

CBS Entertainment Chairwoman Nina Tassler said Ferguson "infused the broadcast with tremendous energy, unique comedy, insightful interviews and some of the most heartfelt monologues seen on television."

The Scottish-born Ferguson, 51, became a U.S. citizen during his tenure on the show.

He already has a new job lined up, as host of "Celebrity Name Game," a syndicated game show set to debut later this year.

But he joked about his plans with the audience.

After his stint ends, "I'll go and do something else. Probably, I'm thinking, carpentry. But I haven't made my mind up yet. ... I feel like doing this show for 10 years, that's enough," he said.

Guest LL Cool J told Ferguson that "I hate to see you go."

It's been an unusually busy period of personnel changes in the late-night television arena. Jimmy Fallon took over the "Tonight" show on NBC from Jay Leno in February and was an instant sensation, ascending to the top of the ratings against Letterman and ABC's Jimmy Kimmel. Letterman announced that he would be leaving CBS after more than three decades in late-night TV.

Chelsea Handler also has said she will be leaving her late-night show on E!

CBS said it plans to continue "The Late Late Show" and will be searching for another host. There's another opening at Comedy Central, which is looking to replace "The Colbert Report" when it ends at the end of the year.

Google, Jay Z among 2014 Webby winners

NEW YORK (AP)—Google, Jay Z and crowdfunding site Kickstarter are among the winners of this year's Webby Awards, a celebration of Internet achievement that got its start nearly two decades ago.

The awards are presented by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences, a group of about 1,000 Web experts and Internet professionals. Judges included Tumblr founder David Karp and "House of Cards" actor Kevin Spacey.

Each Webby category is split in two: There's an award from the academy and a "people's voice" award for which anyone can cast an online vote. Winners in the latter category include Beyonce, Tumblr, the NASA website and satirical news site The Onion (which was also the academy's pick in the humor category).

The website "Reasons My Son Is Crying" received both the Webby and the people's voice award in the personal blog or website category. The site features photos of bawling children captioned with the reasons they are upset, which range from "I wouldn't let him eat dog food" to "we told him that his dinosaur is blue."

Harvard law professor Lawrence Lessig won a lifetime achievement award. Lessig cofounded Creative Commons, which provides a way for people to license their online work for public use.

The Jamaican Bobsleigh Team won Athlete of the Year honors for using crowdfunding to finance its trip to the Sochi Olympics. The team raised $129,687.17 from the crowdfunding site Crowdtilt and also received unsolicited donations from the supporters of Dogecoin, the cryptocurrency inspired by a silly Internet meme.

The awards will be handed out on May 19 in New York in a ceremony famous for restricting winners to five-word acceptance speeches. Actor and comedian Patton Oswalt will host.

At 68, Diane Keaton is pretty great as she is

By BOB MINZESHEIMER
USA TODAY

NEW YORK—At 68, Diane Keaton has what some may consider age-appropriate wrinkles and crow's feet around her eyes, but when she says, "I have never had work done," she's not boasting.

It's complicated, she says, which is why she wrote *Let's Just Say It Wasn't Pretty* (Random House). It's a collection of 13 short essays about aging, beauty, the men in her life, her two adopted children (ages 18 and 13) and why she's never married and says she never will.

As she begins her book tour, she appears for an interview dressed in full-fledged Keaton attire: a brown "Annie Hall hat," as she puts it, a "Cary Grant-like" scarf tucked into a large white blouse, a thick black belt, tight black pencil pants and classic wing-tip black shoes studded with silver dots.

Her answers are punctuated with laughter and filled with digressions.

In her book, Keaton struggles to explain why four decades after her breakout roles in The Godfather (1972) and Annie Hall (1977), she's avoided what she calls "surgical interventions." No Botox. No Restylane.

Over a cup of green tea at a downtown Manhattan hotel, she questions the definition of "work being done." After all, she notes, at photo shoots, "someone is working on my face and my hair…Someone is trying to youthenize me."

She says she admires women like comedians Phyllis Diller and Joan Rivers, "among the first to openly discuss their multiple cosmetic surgeries. It takes strength to fess up to your imperfections." She likes "women who utilize their flaws and play with them."

Yahoo to show 2 comedy series in video expansion

NEW YORK (AP)—Yahoo will release two new comedy series next year in hopes of becoming an even more serious player in Internet video programming.

The expansion announced Monday during a presentation in New York makes Yahoo Inc. the latest technology company to mount a challenge to Netflix Inc., which runs the Internet's largest Internet video subscription service.

Microsoft Corp., Amazon.com Inc. and Hulu.com are among the other companies angling for a piece of the growing audience watching video piped over high-speed Internet connections instead of broadcast signals or cable services.

Yahoo's comedies are "Other Space," a show revolving around an alternate universe set in the 22nd century, and "Sin City Saints," a show about the front-office antics of a fictional basketball team. Both series will consist of eight half-hour episodes.

Financial terms of Yahoo's deals to license the new series weren't disclosed. "Other Space" is the brainchild of three-time Emmy nominee Paul Feig, who has previously worked on acclaimed TV series, "Freaks and Geeks" and "The Office." The creative forces behind "Sin City Saints" include former Emmy nominee Bryan Gordon, who also once worked on "The Office" as well as the HBO comedy "Curb Your Enthusiasm."

Beyonce, Jay Z to co-headline summer tour

NEW YORK (AP)—Beyonce and husband Jay Z will launch the co-headlining "On the Run Tour" on June 25 in Miami.

Beyonce made the announcement Monday. The stadium tour will visit Philadelphia; East Rutherford, N.J.; Chicago; and Los Angeles. It wraps Aug. 5 in San Francisco.

Tickets go on sale Friday. Pre-sale tickets go on sale Tuesday.

Beyonce and Jay Z have collaborated on a number of songs, including the hits "Crazy In Love," "'03 Bonnie & Clyde," ''Deja Vu," ''Part II (On the Run)" and the recent smash "Drunk In Love."

Beyonce released her ultra-successful self-titled fifth album late last year in surprise form. Jay Z, who toured with Justin Timberlake last year, also had success with the release of "Magna Carta Holy Grail."

AP

This Nov. 23, 2012 file photo shows entertainers Jay Z and his wife Beyonce at the Brooklyn Nets against the Los Angeles Clippers NBA basketball game at Barclays Center in New York.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Wyoming museum acquires Lone Ranger's pistol

CODY, Wyo. (AP)—A museum in Wyoming has acquired an old pistol made famous by a masked hero of television from more than 60 years ago. The Lone Ranger's Colt .45 is now on display at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, in Cody. The single-action revolver belonged to actor John Hart. He portrayed the Lone Ranger in the original TV series that ran from 1952 to 1954, about a masked Texas Ranger who battled injustice in the Old West. His sidekick Tonto was one of the most well-known American Indian stereotypes of all time. Hart used several firearms over his acting career, but this gun is special. It features ivory grips and intricate engraving. The *Powell Tribune* reports the museum also has acquired autographed photos of Hart in costume and a cookbook he wrote in the 1990s.

Ai Weiwei in film fundraising dispute

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei says he was misled in lending his name and image to an independent science-fiction film. In a letter to director Jason Wishnow, Ai says he doesn't approve of the way in which he was used to promote "The Sandstorm." The letter was sent on Ai's behalf on April 23 and confirmed Tuesday as authentic by Ai's assistant. In it, Ai says he did not give consent for Wishnow to use his name and image to promote the film and that he agreed to only take a minor role in the project but was now being advertised as the film's star. The fundraising website Kickstarter posted a notice on its website saying the film was the subject of an intellectual property dispute and currently unavailable.

Fox to broadcast live musical 'Grease' next year

NEW YORK (AP)—Fox apparently isn't going to let NBC dominate the world of live TV musicals. Fox jumped into the theater game Monday by announcing it will broadcast a three-hour live version of the musical "Grease" that will feature "a young ensemble cast" that has yet to be named. NBC got a ratings boost last December with its live broadcast of "The Sound of Music" starring Carrie Underwood. It says it's working on a live production of "Peter Pan" for next December. "Grease" features such songs as "Summer Nights," "Greased Lightnin'," "We Go Together" and "You're the One That I Want." It was made into a 1978 film starring John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John. The live version will be a production of Paramount Television.

Boyfriend's 'other woman' is permanently attached

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend and I have been dating for two years. We live together, and his child from another woman lives with us. I love my boyfriend and his child, but one thing prevents me from imagining us being married: He has his child's mother's name tattooed on his body.

The tattoo bothers me for many reasons, and I'd like him to have it covered up if we ever do marry. He says he doesn't want to get rid of it. When the topic comes up, we argue.

Am I unreasonable for wanting him to get rid of the tattoo? If that woman really is in his past, why does he need a constant reminder of her on his body?

IN A STINK OVER INK

DEAR IN A STINK: You're asking the wrong person. Only your boyfriend can answer that. He may not want to go to the expense, or to experience the pain of having more artwork done. Or he may not like the idea that you are telling him what to do.

However, if he has been living with you for two years, I doubt it's because he's still carrying a torch for someone else. If you love him and the two of you want to get married, my advice is to accept him warts, artwork and all, because regardless of any romance in his past, YOU have habeas corpus. (That's Latin for "you have the body.")

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I consider myself a social person and enjoy talking to friends on the phone. My problem is, when I talk to one of them, she will never let me get off the phone. Sometimes we'll talk for several hours, but eventually I have other obligations and have to go. When I tell her that, she often ignores me and keeps right on talking.

I don't want to be rude, but sometimes I have to say goodbye four and five times before she finally acknowledges that I must end the call. It irritates me. I like talking to her, but I can't go on and on forever. How can I make her let me off the phone without hanging up on her or upsetting her?

MR. NICE GUY

DEAR MR. NICE GUY: The person you're describing obviously has less going on in her life than you do. She may also be a compulsive talker.

The next time you talk to her, make the conversation face-to-face and tell her that as much as you like her, you don't have the amount of time to spend on the phone that she does. Explain that when you tell her you must end the conversation, if she doesn't stop talking within five minutes, you will have to hang up. And then do it.

Will she like it? No. But the alternative is that she will continue to take advantage of you— which she has been doing because you have allowed it.

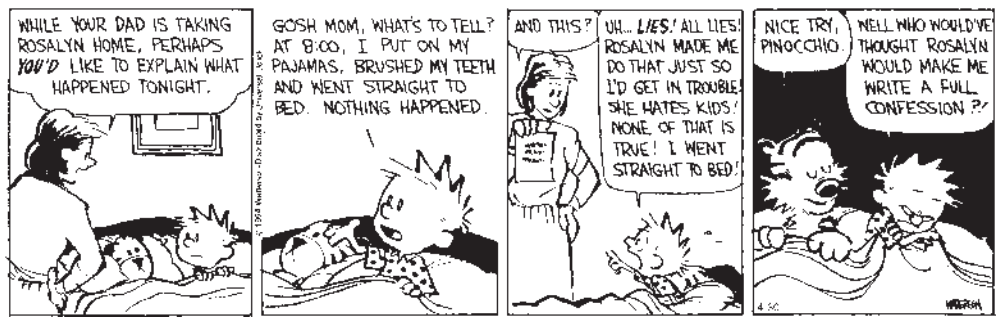
■■■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

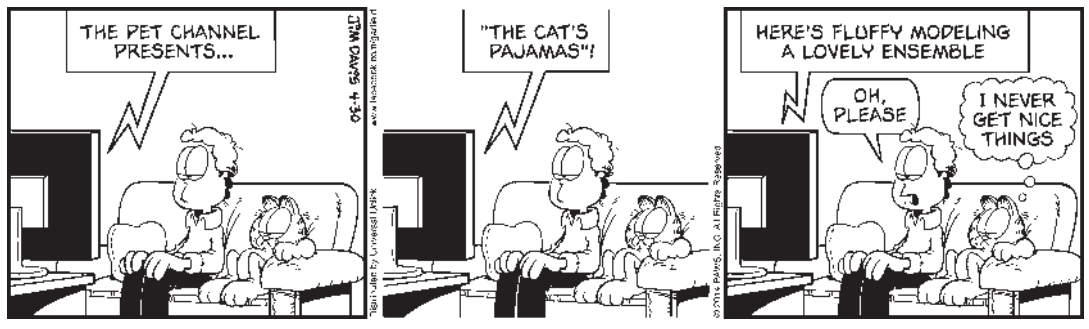
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WHILE YOUR DAD IS TAKING ROSALYN HOME, PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED TONIGHT.
GOSH MOM, WHAT'S TO TELL? AT 8:00, I PUT ON MY PAJAMAS, BRUSHED MY TEETH AND WENT STRAIGHT TO BED. NOTHING HAPPENED.
AND THIS?
UH... LIES! ALL LIES! ROSALYN MADE ME DO THAT JUST SO I'D GET IN TROUBLE! SHE HATES KIDS! NONE OF THAT IS TRUE! I WENT STRAIGHT TO BED!
NICE TRY, PINOCCHIO.
WELL WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT ROSALYN WOULD MAKE ME WRITE A FULL CONFESSION?!

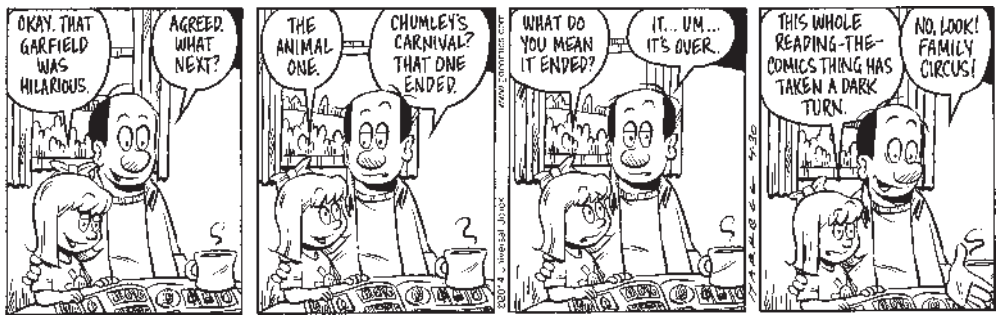
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


OKAY. THAT GARFIELD WAS HILARIOUS.
AGREED. WHAT NEXT?
THE ANIMAL ONE.
CHUMLEY'S CARNIVAL? THAT ONE ENDED.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN IT ENDED?
IT... UM... IT'S OVER.
THIS WHOLE READING-THE-COMICS THING HAS TAKEN A DARK TURN.
NO, LOOK! FAMILY CIRCUS!

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Puncturing tool
4 Water barrier
7 Jai —
8 Falana and Albright
10 "Shake well before —"
11 Baffler
13 Porridge-eating trio
16 Writer Rand
17 George of "Star Trek"
18 Brazilian tourist spot
19 Cribbage scorers
20 Big screen format
21 Down East
23 Thanksgiving parade sponsor
25 Whammy
26 Infant
27 Early bird?
28 Battery measures
30 Mauna —
33 "In the Still of the Night" quintet
36 Vestiges
37 Adores
38 Celebrities
39 Raw minerals
40 Illustrations
41 Club —

DOWN
1 Extraterrestrial
2 Desire
3 Reduce the load
4 Recipient
5 Suspect's excuse
6 Sorcerer
7 Wan
8 Welsh veggies
9 Falsely ingratiating
10 Actress Hagen
12 Operatic solos
14 Go ballistic
15 Fenway squad
19 Snapshots
20 Unfriendly
21 Possibly will
22 Incenses
23 Wrestling surfaces
24 Son of King David
25 Lustrous black
26 Consecrate
28 Ecclesiastical agent
29 Not hidden
30 Dwelt (in)
31 Change for a five
32 Donkey
34 — morgana
35 Ripped

Solution time: 21 mins.

D	A	D	A		G	R	U		F	A	R	O
U	R	A	L		R	U	M		I	R	O	N
M	A	I	L		A	R	S	I	N	T	H	F
A	B	S	O	L	V	E		B	A	S	E	S
			W	A	Y		A	I	L			
C	L	A	S	S		A	B	S	E	N	C	E
P	O	D			D	I	E			B	O	L
A	B	S	C	O	N	D		P	S	A	L	M
			I	M	A		A	C	E			
L	E	A	R	N		A	B	S	T	A	I	N
A	B	S	C	I	S	S	A		U	N	D	O
R	O	I	L		O	T	T		P	I	E	R
A	N	T	E		P	I	E		S	L	A	M

Yesterday's answer 4-30

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kunal Nayyar, 33; Dianna Agron, 28; Kirsten Dunst, 32; Johnny Galecki, 39

Happy Birthday: Do whatever it takes to stabilize your situation both at work and at home. Making decisions that are safe and long-term will ensure that you will have the wiggle room you require to remain steady and able to make whatever adjustments are required. Love is on the rise and a commitment can be made. Your numbers are 6, 13, 24, 27, 31, 36, 47.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Your desire to please will lead you into situations that make you feel that you are being taken advantage of. Learn to say no and to limit what you will do for others. Friendship at a cost isn't likely to last. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Get busy and accomplish what you can instead of standing still and dwelling on what you cannot do. Emotions will run high and must be channeled properly if you want to avoid an unpredictable situation that is nearly impossible to fix. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Don't reveal personal information. Protect your ideas and plans for the future if you don't want to face meddling. Put your energy into making the personal changes that will make you feel good about who you are and the way you look. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Develop your creative ideas and share your concerns with people you trust to help you make the necessary changes. Love is on the rise and spending time with someone who shares your feelings will bring you closer together. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Keep a lid on what you plan to do next. The element of surprise will help you get what you want without interference. An emotional situation can lead to a costly turn of events. Protect your reputation and your assets. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Talks will lead to progress. The more you learn and interact with others, the further along you will be. Network, share your ideas and put your plans in motion. There is money to be made along with personal improvements. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Pending legal, financial or medical issues must be given top priority. Don't let the changes going on around you stop you from making the right personal choice for you. Improve your living arrangements any way you can. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Put more effort into learning and improving your surroundings. Building an area that is more convenient to achieving the goals you have set will help improve your confidence and inspire you to forge ahead. Romance is in the stars. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Make sure that whatever changes you are making to your home or personal life are beneficial. You are likely to make a poor decision that can hurt your relationship with someone you've known a long time. Think twice before making a move. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Take a moment to enjoy your friends, family and your domestic scene. Sticking close to home will give you the opportunity to make the little alterations that will bring you greater happiness. Share your joy with the ones you love. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Don't let temptation take over. Spend less, budget wisely and focus on the changes you can make to cut corners while you improve your earning potential. It's all about hard work, good organization and your desire to advance. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Share your ideas and spend time with the people you know well and trust. Plan your course of action regarding an investment or project you want to pursue. Financial stabilization is within reach if you make the right choice. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are courageous, enduring and practical. You are sensitive, creative and kind.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		9	3	8	1	7		
	3						1	
1				2				3
4				6				8
6	7			4	2	5		9
2								1
7								2
	5			9			6	
		6	4	1	5	3		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 4/30

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

9	1	4	6	2	5	7	3	8
5	6	7	3	8	4	1	9	2
3	2	8	7	9	1	6	4	5
6	8	3	5	1	9	4	2	7
2	7	9	4	6	3	5	8	1
4	5	1	8	7	2	9	6	3
1	4	2	9	5	8	3	7	6
7	9	5	2	3	6	8	1	4
8	3	6	1	4	7	2	5	9

Difficulty Level ★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

NATIONAL HONESTY DAY — **Solution: 8 letters**

D	B	T	T	H	P	Y	T	I	R	G	E	T	N	I
C	R	E	N	C	O	U	R	A	G	E	O	P	E	N
O	A	A	L	U	E	N	N	A	N	S	W	E	R	S
M	V	N	W	I	L	R	O	W	(P)	D	T	E	D	A
M	E	N	D	R	E	B	R	R	O	(A)	V	T	L	F
U	R	O	W	I	O	V	R	O	C	O	(S)	U	I	E
N	Y	U	R	T	D	F	E	I	C	L	K	(T)	H	Q
I	S	N	I	S	R	M	T	N	H	N	A	T	C	U
C	D	C	T	I	P	N	U	H	L	U	E	S	H	E
A	E	E	E	L	E	O	A	F	G	I	P	U	A	S
T	E	N	O	H	P	U	U	G	Y	I	S	R	N	T
E	D	Y	T	Y	R	O	T	S	R	L	A	T	G	I
S	E	U	P	R	O	M	I	S	E	E	P	R	E	O
R	A	C	K	N	O	W	L	E	D	G	E	M	T	N
L	S	T	C	A	F	Y	T	I	R	E	C	N	I	S

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Acknowledge, Agree, Announce, Answers, Authenticate, Believe, Blunt, Bravery, Candid, Change, Children, Communicate, Correct, Deeds, Employer, Encourage, Facts, Friends, Honor, Imply, Integrity, Listen, Open, Own Up, Past, Promise, Proof, Questions, Safe, Sincerity, Speak, Spouse, Story, Straightforward, Trust, Uncover, Unload, Write

Yesterday's Answer: Double Vision

Treasury 12, 13, 14 or 15 can be purchased online at wonderword.universaluclick.com. (Contain 130 puzzles.)

CLASSIFIED ADS

EMPLOYMENT

(1) Jewelry Appraiser. Must have 4 to 5 years experience in jewelry appraisal, honest and trustworthy.

(1) Administrative Officer – Must have 3-5 years experience as an administrative assistant plus 3-4 years experience as an administrative officer. Must have experience in pawnshop industry. Applicant must also have knowledge of computer software such as Peachtree Accounting, Microsoft Excel and Word, for occupation revolves around the handling of information and assignments through the use of these softwares. Must know how to read reports and financial statements. Must also know how to prepare CW-1 applications, taxes, licenses and permits. Must have reliable transportation and valid driver's license. Applicants must mail resume with valid identifications, police clearance and previous employment certifications to PLATINUM INC. PMB 326 PPP BOX 10000 SAIPAN MP 96950.

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Interested Applicants may send resume to annesong71@gmail.com
No staffing agencies. No phone calls please.

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Salary negotiable.
Interested applicants may drop by the office at DPA CAR MART in San Antonio

J.C. Tenorio Enterprises Inc.
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Interested applicants must email a resume to hrd3@joeten.com

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(1) Sales Associates
(1) Assistant Store Manager
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James, Heat complete sweep of Bobcats, 109-98

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—LeBron James heard the cheers from the crowd as he lay on the court holding his right thigh and writhing in pain.

It only seemed to awaken the four-time league MVP.

James scored 19 of his game-high 31 points after sustaining a thigh bruise early in the third quarter, helping the Miami Heat earn a first-round sweep of the Charlotte Bobcats with a 109-98 victory Monday night. He finished Game 4 10 of 19 from the field and had nine assists.

"It's definitely sore," James said. "I'm fortunate we were able to close out tonight and I can give it a little rest."

He should have plenty of time.

The two-time defending NBA champions will await the winner of Brooklyn-Toronto series, which is tied 2-2. If that series goes the distance it won't wrap up until Sunday.

James said playing Charlotte was a good first test and Miami is headed in the right direction as it looks to win its third straight NBA championship.

"We got tested by a young, scrappy Bobcats team," said James, who averaged 36.2 points in eight games against Charlotte this season. "We responded with a championship-type attitude."

Chris Bosh added 17 points and Dwyane Wade battled through foul trouble and finished with 15 as Miami extended its winning streak over Charlotte to 20 games.

The Heat improved to 16-2 in first-round games since James' arrival four years ago. This was the second straight year the Heat swept their first-round series, taking out Milwaukee in four games last season.

This was Miami's ninth consecutive series victory.

"We improved every game and that's the most important thing about this series," James said.

Miami began to take control midway through the third quarter shortly after James gave his teammates a scare when he drove to the basket from the left wing and his right thigh collided with Bismack Biyombo's knee, sending James to the floor.

Concerned teammates gathered around him and he was down for about a minute.

James eventually got up and hobbled to the bench where sat down during a timeout. But he stayed in the game.

After the timeout he buried a 3-pointer and a long jumper before a one-handed dunk to help give Miami a 73-66 lead with 4:51 left in the third quarter. Miami pushed the lead to 13 when Norris Cole knocked down a 3-point buzzer-beater from the right corner at the end of the quarter.

Charlotte never got closer than seven points in the fourth quarter.

Down the stretch, the Heat went to James time and time again with Wade on the bench with five fouls.

James scored 11 points in the fourth quarter, taking advantage of a size advantage against Gerald Henderson.

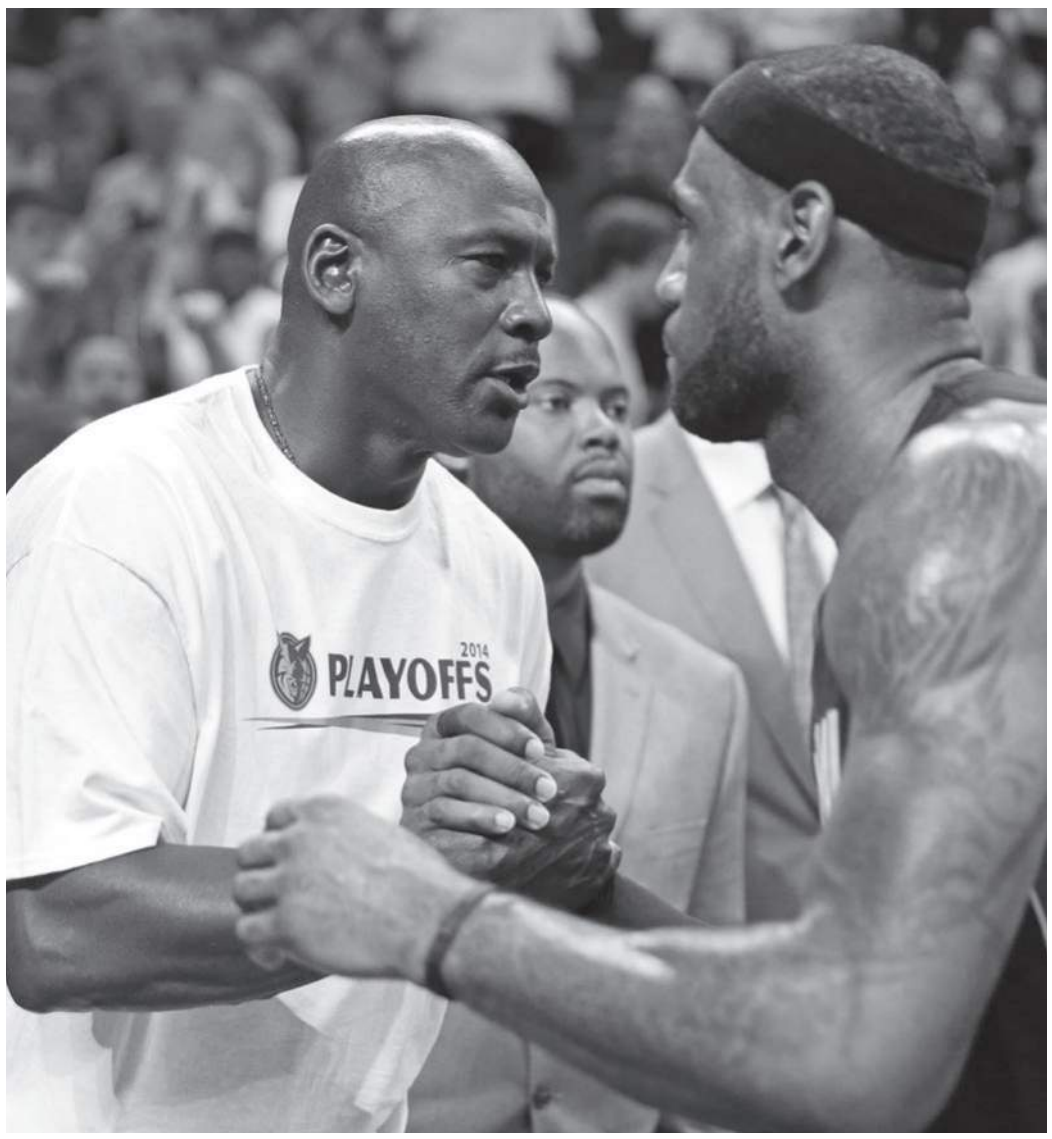
"LeBron was terrific during that stretch of the fourth quarter," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "I thought the last 5 minutes of the fourth quarter there was great execution and trust and the ball was moving and it was just working to the open guy. That was encouraging to see, especially at that time in the game."

The Bobcats played without Al Jefferson, their leading scorer and rebounder who has been bothered by a foot injury since the first quarter of Game 1.

"If you take away the best offensive player from any team in the league it dramatically changes your team," Bobcats coach Steve Clifford said.

Kemba Walker picked up the slack, playing tough throughout and finishing with 29 points on 11-of-15 shooting.

"He showed that he is not afraid of the moment," Clifford said. "He had a really good year and finished in a good way so we should be happy about him."



AP

Charlotte Bobcats owner Michael Jordan, left, shakes hands with Miami Heat's LeBron James, right, after Game 4 of an opening-round NBA basketball playoff series in Charlotte, N.C., Monday, April 28, 2014.

Walker called the game a good learning experience for the inexperienced Bobcats.

"At the same time it's our first go-around in the playoffs for a lot of us and we can only go up from here," Walker said.

In the end, turnovers again spelled doom for the Bobcats.

They turned it over 16 times, leading to 22 Heat points, including two dunks by James.

The loss signaled the end of an era for the Bobcats. They will become the Hornets next season.

Before the game the Heat showed solidarity with the Los Angeles Clippers over the Donald Sterling controversy.

Like the Clippers on Sunday, the Heat ran out of the tunnel wearing their warmups, huddled at center court and tossed their white shooting T-shirts to the ground. They then went through their pregame routine with their red Heat warmup jerseys inside out, hiding the team's logo.

Hawks 107, Pacers 97

In Indianapolis, Mike Scott made five 3-pointers during a 30-6 second-quarter run as Atlanta fended off a furious fourth-quarter rally to beat top-seeded Indiana and take a 3-2 lead in the best-of-seven series.

Atlanta can clinch the first-round series at home Thursday.

Scott scored all 17 of his points during a 12-minute stretch when Atlanta went 13 of 16 from the field and outscored Indiana 41-19 to take a 61-40 halftime lead. The Hawks and the 1970 Milwaukee Bucks are the only road teams in the shot-clock era to score at least 40 points and allow fewer than 20 in any quarter of a playoff game.

Shelvin Mack led the eighth-seeded Hawks with 20 points.

Paul George had 26 for Indiana, which got as close as eight points in the final minute.

Spurs 93, Mavericks 89

In Dallas, Manu Ginobili scored 23 points and Boris Diaw hit a go-ahead 3-pointer in the final minute as San Antonio held off a second-half surge by Dallas to level the first-round playoff series.

The Spurs regained the home-court advantage by getting a split of two games in Dallas, matching what the eighth-seeded Mavericks did in San Antonio.

The Spurs led by 20 points in the third quarter before the Mavericks pulled even midway through the fourth quarter of Game 4. The score was still tied when Diaw hit from long range over Dirk Nowitzki at the top of the key for a 90-87 lead.

Monta Ellis led Dallas with 20 points but missed two potential tying shots after Diaw's basket.

Game 5 is Wednesday night in San Antonio.

Nowitzki had 19 points and was held under 20 in a fourth straight playoff game for the first time since his first postseason in 2001.

Key elements heading into Sterling announcement

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver has scheduled a press conference for Tuesday afternoon to discuss the league's investigation of racist comments purportedly made by Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling during a recorded conversation with a female companion. While the voice has yet to be independently verified as Sterling's, Clippers coach Doc Rivers and Sterling's wife are among those who say they believe it is him speaking.

It is Silver's first true test as NBA commissioner, and he vowed the league would "move extraordinarily quickly in our investigation."

A breakdown of the key elements heading into the press conference:

SILVER'S AUTHORITY: Silver said last weekend that he has broad authority to address issues with owners that threaten the game's best interests. But it remains unclear how far Silver's powers can reach so early in the process.

SUSPENSIONS: There is precedent, in the NBA and other professional sports leagues, for an owner to be suspended. If Sterling is suspended, he would be unable to attend games or team functions for the duration of the suspension and would likely have to appoint someone to take over the day-to-day operations of the team.

AP

In this Monday, Dec. 19, 2011 photo, Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling watches the second half of an NBA preseason basketball game between the Los Angeles Clippers and the Los Angeles Lakers in Los Angeles.

FINES: The league's bylaws allow for Silver to levy a penalty of up to $1 million without needing the approval of other owners if he deems Sterling's actions have damaged the league as a whole.

OWNERSHIP REVOCATION: This is a very unlikely outcome, at least right away. The league's owners are wary of forcing Sterling to sell his team, even if it would bring him a financial windfall. The league took over the New Orleans Hornets from previous owner George Shinn, but that was because of financial difficulties. The Clippers are a profitable team and Sterling is worth a reported $1.9 billion, so money is not an issue in this case. Plus, taking such measures would almost assuredly bring a lawsuit from Sterling and a long, expensive legal fight.

POSSIBLE SCENARIO: Given that only a few days have passed since the recording first was made public by TMZ, it would be hard to imagine a definitive move being made by Silver on Tuesday. The most likely possibility would seem to be an indefinite suspension while the NBA conducts a thorough investigation into not only this incident, but Sterling's past as well to try to determine if a pattern has developed. Silver could also issue a fine right away while leaving open the possibility for additional financial penalties pending the outcome of the investigation.

Gray throws 3-hitter for A's in 4-0 win at Texas

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Sonny Gray allowed just three hits for his first career complete game as the Oakland Athletics beat Texas 4-0 Monday in Rangers ace Yu Darvish's shortest outing in the major leagues.

Gray (4-1) allowed only three singles while striking out six. Texas got only one runner to third base against the right-hander, who threw two wild pitches in the sixth after Robinson Chirinos singled.

Darvish (1-1) was gone after 3 1-3 innings, pulled after walking No. 9 batter Eric Sogard for the second time. Darvish is winless his last nine home starts.

Josh Donaldson had a two-run single in the third, and the A's made it 4-0 an inning later when Josh Reddick had an RBI triple before coming home on Daric Barton's sacrifice fly.

AP

Oakland Athletics starting pitcher Sonny Gray, center, is congratulated by teammates Dan Straily (67) and Scott Kazmir (26) after pitching an entire baseball game against the Texas Rangers, Monday, April 28, 2014, in Arlington, Texas.

White Sox 7, Rays 3

In Chicago, Alejandro De Aza hit a two-run homer, and Adam Eaton and Marcus Semien had two-run doubles to lead the Chicago White Sox to a comeback victory over the Tampa Bay Rays.

White Sox slugger Jose Abreu, named American League co-player of the week earlier in the day, went 2 for 4 with a walk and an RBI, his 32nd.

But it was the lesser trio that did most of the damage, driving in five of the seven runs.

The White Sox (14-13) move above .500 by taking three of four from Tampa. It was Chicago's third series win this season.

Andre Rienzo (2-0) allowed five hits and three runs—two earned—in six innings to get the win.

Jake Odorizzi (1-3) allowed eight hits and four runs in 4 1-3 innings to get the loss.

Angels 6, Indians 3

In Anaheim, California, Mike Trout had a go-ahead RBI single in the eighth inning and Raul Ibanez added a two-run triple, leading the Angels to a victory over the Indians.

Fernando Salas (2-0) got the victory with a hitless eighth inning after relieving starter Tyler Skaggs, and former Indians setup man Joe Smith got three outs for his first save after replacing the ineffective Ernesto Frieri as the Angels' closer.

Justin Masterson (0-1) gave up six runs and seven hits in 7 1-3 innings after getting a no-decision in each of his first five starts.

Brewers 5, Cardinals 3

In St. Louis, Khris Davis overcame striking out four times earlier in the game to come through with a run-scoring triple in the 12th inning and lead the Milwaukee Brewers to a over the St. Louis Cardinals.

Davis drove in Jonathan Lucroy, who doubled off Seth Maness (0-2) to start the inning. Mark Reynolds then drove in Davis with a sacrifice fly. Davis, who finished 1 for 6, struck out in the second, fifth, sixth and 10th innings.

Zach Duke (2-0) picked up the win with two innings of scoreless relief, and Francisco Rodriguez recorded his 12th save in as many opportunities by getting Jhonny Peralta to fly out with two on to end the game.

Milwaukee, which leads the majors with 19 wins, has won four of five and eight of 10.

Allen Craig and Matt Holliday homered for St. Louis, which has lost four of six.

Rockies 8, Diamondbacks 5

In Phoenix, Troy Tulowitzki homered, had two doubles and drove in three runs to lead the big-hitting Colorado Rockies to a5 win over the Arizona Diamondbacks.

Baseball's best offensive team so far this season, the Rockies roughed up Wade Miley (2-3) for seven extra-base hits in the first six innings, including a pair of homers.

Tulowitzki led off the sixth with his sixth homer and Justin Morneau added a two-run shot later in the inning to extend his hitting streak to 12 games. Nolan Arenado had one of Colorado's six doubles to stretch his hitting streak to a baseball-best 18 games and the Rockies had 12 hits overall.

Franklin Morales (3-1) allowed four runs in five innings and LaTroy Hawkins worked a perfect ninth for his eighth straight save.

Gerardo Parra homered for Arizona.

Padres 6, Giants 4

In San Francisco, Rene Rivera hit a go-ahead three-run homer in the fifth inning to follow his two-run double for a career-high five RBIs, single-handedly backing Tyson Ross in the San Diego Padres' victory against the San Francisco Giants.

Ross (3-3) did just enough over 5 1-3 innings to beat the Giants for the second time in 11 days, allowing eight hits and four runs with four strikeouts and two walks.

Rivera hadn't driven in a run all season before Monday, and the five RBIs were most by a Padres player at 15-year-old AT&T Park. Brandon Hicks homered for the second straight day, following his walkoff a day earlier against Cleveland with a leadoff shot in the fifth.

Giants starter Madison Bumgarner (2-3) walked a season-high four in the loss.

First base umpire Angel Hernandez had two calls overturned by replay.

Troy Vincent to speak with suspended players

NEW YORK (AP)—Troy Vincent is hitting the road in his new job as the NFL's football operations director, meeting with players who have been suspended for on-field incidents.

He would not specify which players. Nor did Vincent reveal the identity of other players who are on a league list of those closing in on suspensions for further on-field rules violations. But he's got a clear plan about what he will discuss with them.

"It's all about educating," says Vincent, who recently replaced Ray Anderson in one of the league's most powerful jobs. "The devil is in the details.

"When I am making the rounds with the suspended players, I want to make sure we are educating them to keep them on the field. What were they seeing on the plays (that led to suspensions)? Are they seeing what they are supposed to? Do they completely understand the rules? It's about taking the guessing out."

AP

In this Jan. 31, 2013, file photo, Former NFL football player Troy Vincent speaks during an NFL Player Health and Safety news conference in New Orleans.

Among the players suspended by the league last season were Texans defensive end Antonio Smith, Titans safety Michael Griffin, Buccaneers safety Dashon Goldson, Redskins safety Brandon Merriweather and Colts linebacker Erik Walden, each for one regular-season game. Each for illegal hits.

Vincent, a former Pro Bowl defensive back and a former president of the NFL Players Association, certainly recognizes what players see and feel in the heat of a game. He believes his experience helps him communicate with current players. And, more important, it helps him find steps to make pro football safer.

"I have that insight from being on the field, from being in their shoes," Vincent says. "My message to these players is, `We want to keep you on the field. We want to keep you safe.'

``Rules to protect the players are essential."

Vincent was part of the development of many current NFL rules while working for the union, which should be comforting to the players association. For several years, the NFLPA has sought more effective means of guidance on the rules from the league.

A union official says the NFLPA finds it important to gather as much information as possible on what is expected from the players on the field.

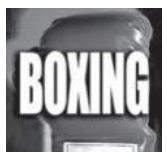
The meetings with players who have been suspended should not be perceived as a warning, Vincent says. He looks at them as an opportunity to explain policies he was a part of constructing, and will listen to suggestions for simplifying the rule book.

"I will work to be a bridge builder," Vincent says. "My responsibility is to preserve the game, develop its future, and to protect the players and the brand."

Mayweather: Manny's power gone

LOS ANGELES—Floyd Mayweather says Manny Pacquiao has lost a step and that the Filipino's superstar slide has coincided with his decision to split from former strength trainer Alex Ariza.

The 37-year-old undefeated welterweight champ Mayweather weighed in Wednesday on the latest performance by Pacquiao who beat Timothy Bradley on April 12 in Las Vegas in a rematch of their first bout in June 2012.



"Actually, I did watch the fight," said Mayweather who is training to fight Argentina's Marcos Maidana in a 147-pound title bout on May 3 in Las Vegas.

"You know, I haven't seen Pacquiao fight in years. I've seen highlights, but I haven't seen Pacquiao fight since he fought Miguel Cotto."

Mayweather said he wasn't impressed and fired a couple of verbals jabs of his own at Pacquiao. He said Pacquiao looked like an "amateur" and that in his opinion the World Boxing Organization welterweight champ has less power and stamina than he did five years ago.

"I thought Pacquiao fought like an amateur and I wasn't pleased with his performance," Mayweather said. "He got the victory the best way he knew how. I'm seeing something totally different in Pacquiao.

Pacquiao worked with Ariza for five years before splitting with him last year. Ariza had a key role in helping Pacquiao win titles in several different weight classes, including 147 and 154 pounds.

Mayweather said it was the first time since 2009 that he has watched a full fight of Pacquiao's.

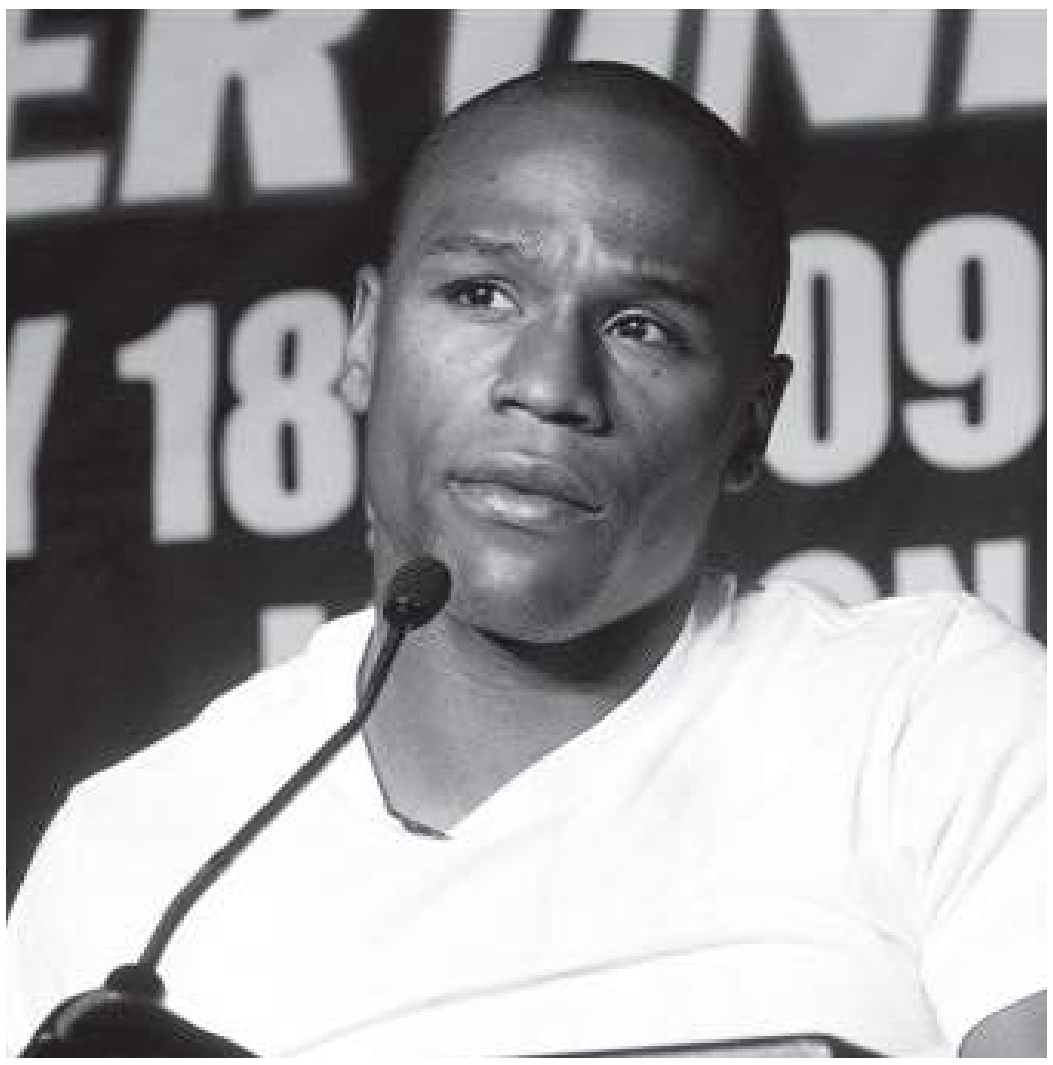
Mayweather couldn't have watched Pacquiao's first fight against Bradley on June 9, 2012 even if he wanted to. Just eight days earlier, Mayweather had been sentenced to three months in a Las Vegas jail for hitting his ex-girlfriend, Josie Harris, in front of his children.

'Total change in Pacquiao's power'

"I noticed since Ariza is not with Pacquiao, a total change in Pacquiao's power," he said. "I don't see the same pop in Pacquiao's shots, the same snap. He is getting tired."

Pacquiao and Mayweather were once considered the world's top pound-for-pound fighters and record profits were expected from a showdown.

But a disagreement over the splitting of the purse, pre-fight blood testing and a bad blood between Mayweather and Pacquiao's promoter Bob Arum scuttled negotiations for a mega-fight.



AP

Floyd Mayweather says Manny Pacquiao fought like an amateur and he wasn't pleased with his performance against Timothy Bradley on April 12 in Las Vegas.

Mayweather, who has been accused by some people of dodging Pacquiao, said even though he feels the Filipino southpaw isn't the dominating boxer he once was, he is in no hurry to step in the ring with him.

"I'm seeing something totally different in Pacquiao, but still, that don't make me say, 'Yeah, I am going out there and fight him,' because he's with Bob Arum and I'm with Mayweather Promotions," he said on Wednesday.

Arum recently blasted the Mayweather-Maidana matchup calling it "nonsense".

Despite their differences, Mayweather applauded Pacquiao for the victory over Bradley.

"You know, congratulations, he was the better man," Mayweather said.

Mayweather, who is 45-0 with 26 knockouts, defended the decision to fight Maidana, who will have a hard time trying to out box the clever American.

"You can't say it is going to be an easy fight for me," said Mayweather. "Everyone thinks he is just going to be a push-over but I don't see it that way." ***(AFP)***

SGA April Ace this Sunday

The Saipan Golfers Association's 2014 April Ace of the Month Tournament is scheduled for this Sunday, May 4, at Laolao Bay Golf & Resort's east course. Tee time is set at 10:30am with show time at 9:30am. ***(PR)***

ENFORCERS

From Page 28

into the board early, as their first two batters Vincent Keremius and Lorenzo Sebaklim reached home at the top of the first off Agda's pitching error and an Enforcers' booboo at third base, respectively. Agda then settled down at the mound and got his first strike against third batter Austin Indalecio and the Enforcers starting pitcher later stranded runners at third and second after earning his second strikeout for the third out. The Comets were earlier called for the second out on a 5-3 putout play.

The Enforcers also lit up the scoreboard in the first inning, which ended in a deadlock, 2-all, after Secharmidal led off for the team and made it home off a Comets' error at left field and a passed ball drove Agda home

The game remained in a deadlock after two complete innings with Secharmidal stranding two Comets runners and getting two more strikeouts after relieving Agda early in the second inning. Secharmidal was then called for a hit by pitch at the start of the top of the third and leadoff batter Aurel Mendiola went to reach home after another mistake from the former to put the Comets back into the driver's seat, 3-2.

However, the Comets quickly lost the upper hand at the bottom third, as the Enforcers racked up four runs. Babauta hit an RBI double, Shakobe Rangamar drilled an RBI single, and Garnet Martin lasted a two-run single to help the Enforcers turn the tables on the Comets, 6-3.

The Enforcers never looked back from thereon, as Secharmidal found his rhythm in the next two innings after an early struggle in the third. He picked up two ground balls in the fourth inning and threw to first base for two outs and the Comets were done after only three batters, as Sebaklim returned to the dugout after a 5-3 putout play.

In the fifth inning, Secharmidal started a big defensive stop for Enforcers, as he got hold off a short shot from Kobe Santos and threw to second base to tag out Mendiola. The Comets were then charged with a double play, as second baseman Travis Camacho threw to first baseman Ton Muna, who beat Santos for the third out and stranded a runner at third. Muna earlier caught a fly ball for the first out.

After failing to score in the fourth and fifth, the Comets got their fourth and final run at the top of the sixth inning off an Enforcers' error at shortstop, however the Enforcers countered with two runs at the bottom sixth to keep their distance. Babauta got another double, which brought Nathan Nogis home at the bottom of the sixth. Nogis earlier had a bunt that helped Secharmidal reach home.

Holding a four-run lead, going into the top of the last inning, the Enforcers turned to Babauta to close the game. He started his pitching chores by walking Indalecio, who was eventually beaten to second, while second batter Austin Hocog was tagged out at third. Mendiola batted third, walked to first, stole second, while fourth batter Santos also had a walk. With runners on first and second and two outs, Babauta faced fifth batter Franco Masga, who hit a grounder. Babauta then stepped into the play, picked up the ball, and threw to Muna for the third out and the Enforcers' title-clinching victory.

BABAUTA

From Page 28

in the championship game. The Finals MVP started out at third base for the Enforcers, before taking the mound from Virgil Secharmidal at the top of the seventh and last inning. Babauta went on to give up three walks in his stint at the mound, but redeemed himself when it counted the most, as his 1-3 putout play on Franco Masga stranded two Comets runners and ended the game for the Enforcers.

Besides Babauta, two other Enforcers players also claimed trophies during the awards ceremony. Kier Agda, who was the Enforcers starting pitcher in the finals, was crowned ERA king for his field-best 0.64 ERA, while fellow pitcher Secharmidal ruled the strikeouts category with his 33.

Completing the individual awardees in the Junior League were the Falcons' Benen Iguel and the Fielders' Donovan Ada. Iguel was named batting champion for averaging .500, while Ada was the winner in the home run category, drilling the lone homer in the season.

In the team awards, dethroned champions Red Sox took the best sportsmanship trophy, while the Enforcers were awarded with medals for their pennant win in the division. The Enforcers finished the double-round robin regular season with a 9-1 record, absorbing their lone loss at the hands of the Comets. The pennant and league champions are coached and managed by Lawrence Camacho, Ray Pangelinan, and Lloyd Tarope and supported by House Speaker Joseph Guerrero (IR-Saipan), Rep. Mario Taitaino (Ind-Saipan), and Senate floor leader Ray Yumul (Ind-Saipan).

TWO

From Page 28

a promising 45-30 advantage. Cecilio Bisana led the breakaway, as he scored 10 of his 16 markers in that second quarter, while Pedro Lizama added 6 points off two triples and Jerome Norita chipped in 5.

Island Manpower hung in there, preserving the twin-digit lead with Norita putting the finishing touches on the team's victory. Norita sizzled for 11 markers in the fourth canto, including 9 straight points in that frame.

First Game

Island Manpower 75 – Norita 17, Bisana 16, Capalad 11, Standish 10, Lizama 10, Teregeyo 4.

Hoopaholics 65 – Fitial 19, Lauron 17, Diaz 10, Itibus 10, Sablan 6, Manibusan 4.

Scoring by quarters: 18-16, 45-30, 57-50, 75-65.

Second Game

JP World 99 – Pelisamen 38, J. Estolas 15, Paraiso 12, Peredo 8, Camacho 7, Manalo 5, Deocares 3, Sharry 2.

Toka 83 – Barcinas 15, Joyner 15, Basa 15, Lampkin 10, Lizama 8, Tudela 7, Caro 3.

Scoring by quarters: 17-25, 47-38, 67-52, 99-83.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	15	10	.600	–
Baltimore	12	12	.500	2½
Toronto	12	13	.480	3
Boston	12	14	.462	3½
Tampa Bay	11	15	.423	4½

Central Division

Detroit	12	9	.571	–
Minnesota	12	11	.522	1
Chicago	14	13	.519	1
Kansas City	12	12	.500	1½
Cleveland	11	15	.423	3½

West Division

Oakland	16	10	.615	–
Texas	15	11	.577	1
Los Angeles	12	13	.480	3½
Seattle	10	14	.417	5
Houston	9	17	.346	7

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Atlanta	17	7	.708	–
New York	14	11	.560	3½
Washington	14	12	.538	4
Philadelphia	13	12	.520	4½
Miami	11	14	.440	6½

Central Division

Milwaukee	19	7	.731	–
St. Louis	14	13	.519	5½
Cincinnati	11	14	.440	7½
Pittsburgh	10	16	.385	9
Chicago	8	16	.333	10

West Division

San Francisco	15	11	.577	–
Colorado	15	12	.556	½
Los Angeles	14	12	.538	1
San Diego	13	14	.481	2½
Arizona	8	21	.276	8½

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Big League Finals/Awards Ceremony

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The Padres' Lancaster Secharmidal shows the regular season MVP trophy he received from Hyung Cho Kim, president and general manager of Hanwha Hotels & Resort Co. Ltd, which operates Saipan World Resort, a sponsor of the 2014 Saipan Little League Baseball.

The IT&E Fielders pose with their runners-up trophy.

IT&E Fielders' Khobby Kaipat waits for the pitch.

The Padres' Lancaster Secharmidal makes eye contact with his catcher before throwing a pitch.

The Padres' A.J. Lizama smiles to the camera after getting the Finals MVP trophy during the awards ceremony for the Big League last Thursday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacis Ballfield.

IT&E Fielders' Jose Lizama shows one of the three trophies he took home last week. Lizama was the ERA, home run, and strikeouts champion on the division.

The Lions' Cedric Ada, right, receives the doubles champion trophy from Hyung Cho Kim.

The Padres pose with their championship trophy and officials from World Resort.

League chief statistician A.J. Murig, fourth from left, announces the winner of the Finals MVP award, while other league officials and guests look on.

James, Heat complete sweep of Bobcats, 109-98
PAGE 24

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Gray throws 3-hitter for A's in 4-0 win at Texas
PAGE 25

Enforcers get Junior League title

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

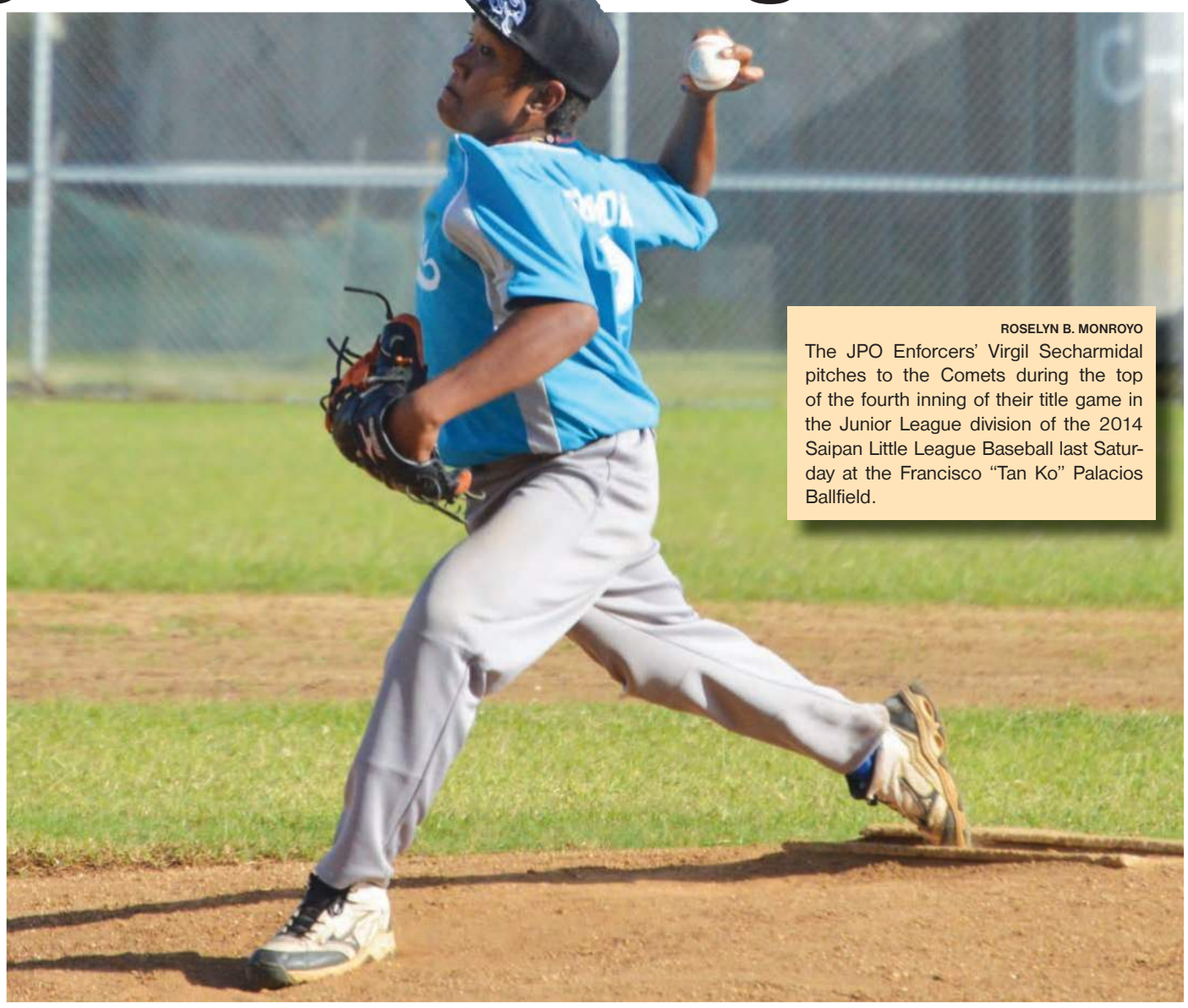
The Enforcers completed their domination in the Junior League division of the 2014 Saipan Little League Baseball with an 8-4 victory against Comets in the winner-take-all finale last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

The Enforcers, who also topped the double-round robin regular season with their 9-1 record, got the methodical win, as they registered six earned runs and utilized their pitchers to hold off the Comets' batters.

Kier Agda, Virgil Secharmidal, and Ethan Babauta pitched for the Enforcers and combined for only three hitters and gave up no earned run in seven innings to help their team clinch the championship and foil the Comets' bid for another upset. The third-seeded Comets, who incidentally handed the Enforcers their lone loss in the season after pulling off a 7-6 win in a classic 19-inning game, marched into the finals after stunning the second-ranked Falcons in the semis, 9-5.

In the finals, the Comets got

See ENFORCERS on Page 26



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
The JPO Enforcers' Virgil Secharmidal pitches to the Comets during the top of the fourth inning of their title game in the Junior League division of the 2014 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

Babauta, Reusora take MVP plums

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Red Sox's Delin Reusora and the Enforcers' Ethan Babauta split the MVP awards in the Junior League division of the 2014 Saipan Little League Baseball.

Reusora was named regular season most valuable player for topping four categories, while Babauta was selected Finals MVP for helping the Enforcers lift the Junior League championship trophy.

The Red Sox outfielder was named runs and doubles champion after collecting 19 and six, respectively. He also ruled the triples race, tying Babauta, as both players earned three triples. In the RBI race, Reusora was all alone at the top spot with his 16.

Babauta, on the other hand, notched his second trophy during the awards ceremony for the Junior League last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield after being adjudged Finals MVP in their 8-4 title win over the Comets. He scored two doubles, one run, and two RBIs

See BABAUTA on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
The JPO Enforcers' Ethan Babauta poses with his Finals MVP trophy during the awards ceremony for the Junior League division of the 2014 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield. Joining him in the photo are SLLB officials Vinnie Sablan, left, and Annie Flores, and Mike Babauta, second left, sales and marketing manager of league sponsor Saipan World Resort.

Two in a row for JP World, Island Manpower

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

JP World and Island Manpower went for the killer blows in the second quarter en route to downing separate foes in the 2014 QQ Rent A Car Invitational Basketball League last Friday night at the Garapan Basketball Court.

Island Manpower played in the curtain-raiser and topped the Hoopaholics, 75-65, while JP World thumped Toka in the second match, 99-83. Island Manpower bagged its second straight win after a 0-2 start, while JP World also earned back-to-back wins and third in four games. The Hoops fell to a 1-4 slate, while Toka absorbed its first loss in three matches.

Toka seemed to boost its chances for a third consecutive win when it led JP World after the first quarter, 25-17. However, JP World wiped out the deficit right in the next period with a pivotal 30-13 scoring run in the second frame. JP World battled back quickly, as it drew at least two field goals each from five players.

Ahead by 9 at halftime, 47-38, JP World stretched the advantage to twin digits, as Toka failed to stop Freddie Pelisamen from creating damage on the latter's defense. Pelisamen knocked in two triples and scored 10 points in the third period alone to give JP World a 67-53 lead, entering the final canto.

Pelisamen was not done yet, as he saved his best for last, drilling 15 in the final canto to finish with 38 points, just 3 points shy of his season-high 41 markers made in their 86-75 win over High-Five last week.

Meanwhile, Island Manpower also leaned on its second-quarter assault en route to the double-digit winning margin against the slumping Hoopaholics.

Up by only a deuce at the end of the opening canto, 18-16, Island Manpower outgunned the Hoops in the second frame, 27-14, to wrap up the half with

See TWO on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
JP World's Rolly Paraiso fakes off the defense of High-Five's Tim Wesley, left, and Ken McCain during their game in the QQ caging last week at the Garapan Basketball Court. JP World won, 86-75, and made it two in a row after beating Toka, 99-83.